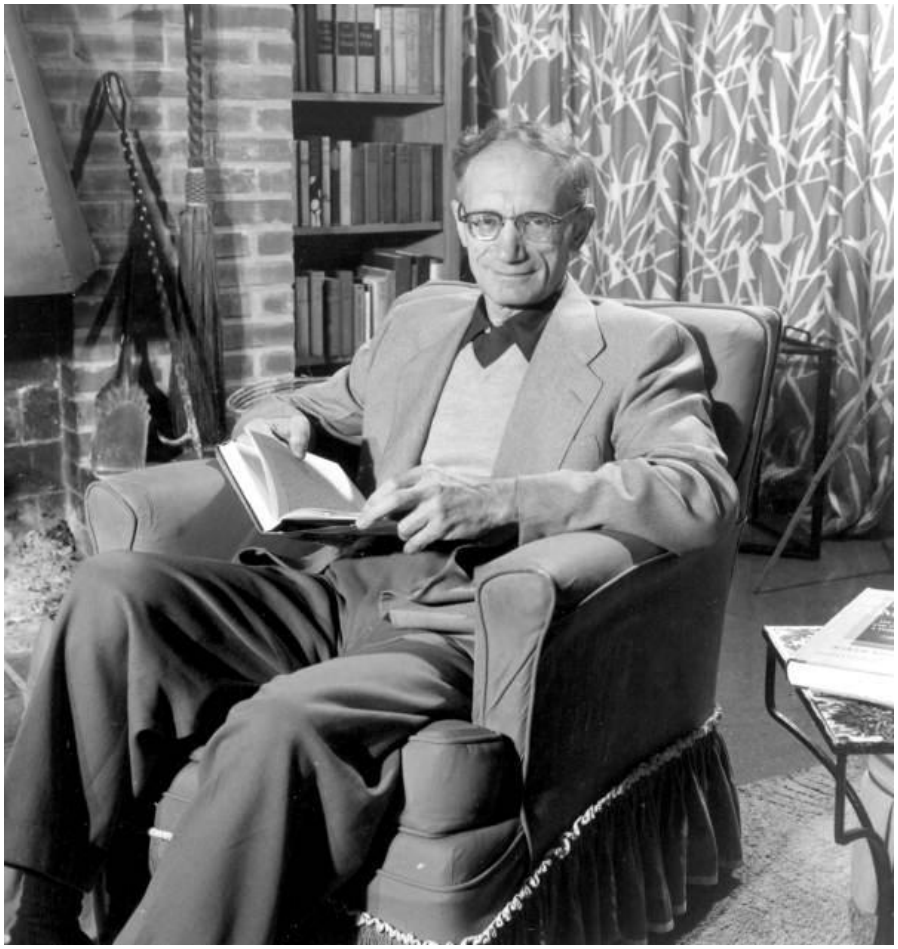
Ralph Borsodi: A Confident Future Learning and Living



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Ralph Borsodi, A Confident Future: Learning and Living

Table of Contents

Introduction to Learning and Living		1
The Legacy of Ralph Borsodi		3
Chapter 1	Early Life	12
Chapter 2	This Ugly Civilization	29
Chapter 3	Homesteader and Community	57
Chapter 4	The School of Living	66
Chapter 5	Prosperity and Security	79
Chapter 6	Decentralism	110
Chapter 7	Education and Living	129
Chapter 8	Melbourne	173
Chapter 9	India	214
Chapter 10	The Education of the Whole Man Book I	227
Chapter 11	The Education of the Whole Man Book II	257
Chapter 12	Seventeen Problems	280
Appendix	Journal of Praxiology Notes	301
About the Author		329

Introduction to Learning and Living

With the assistance of Bob Flatley, my wife and others, I have been working to restore the legacy of Ralph Borsodi. I think you will understand the reason for that in the following "Legacy." The list of his contributions to what we now call sustainability is long and impressive.

This is one of two books I write about the life and work of Ralph Borsodi. There were two distinct parts of his life, two intimately interrelated parts. He was, first of all, a pioneer homesteader. He developed a comprehensive practice for homesteaders and homesteading communities. His objective was personal and family self-reliance and independence, resiliency in the face of change and the turmoil of the modern world. That will be covered in the companion volume, *Ralph Borsodi, A Confident Future: The Green Revolution*. In that book I will also address the legacy of his long-time collaborator Mildred Loomis.

The other major objective in Borsodi's work was a system of education to prepare individuals, families and communities for an alternative lifestyle. Independence is not just grubbing your food from the ground, but rather a philosophy of life. Borsodi was a keen student of the ideals that founded the American Republic. He believed, along with the Founders, that a democratic society was established on learning. Borsodi believed that the citizens of a democratic society must not only be well-informed but have a philosophy of life. He had a special regard for those who took responsibility for this, men and women in all walks of life who probed the accumulated knowledge of humankind to gain a deeper understanding of the nature of the universe, of life and of human society; but of greater importance, took the roll of teacher. It was the teacher, not the politician or warlord or priest, who Borsodi considered the leaders of society.

Borsodi's ideal society, I should point out, is agrarian. It is rural and not urban. It employs the machine for the benefit of humanity and not as an economic engine in its own right. The United States of America was on that path at its founding. However, the just emerging industrial revolution shaped a different history. Perhaps we will continue to progress into a Star Trek future. Perhaps not. This twenty-first century is in a state of growing chaos. It is unimaginable complex – unmanageable at best. Political and economic instability has become a way of life. Global population continues to grow as we deplete non-renewable resources. Of critical importance is the growing scarcity of arable land and fresh water to grow food. But there are other resources, energy and other mineral resources, that are clearly being depleted. Climate change is a growing threat. And 2020 brought us a chilling global pandemic. Many would agree with him that this is an ugly civilization.

In any event, we must develop greater resiliency. That begins with the foodshed. And it depends on people with the knowledge, skills and motivation to insure a reasonable level of community security. That requires adequate and appropriate education and that is what Borsodi spent much of his life developing.

Too many people are worried about the collapse of modern society. We need to consider an alternative. And if things work out, if progress finds a way to continue, then there will be increasing numbers who may wish to turn to a more peaceful, secure and communal, agrarian way of life. That is Borsodi's Green Revolution. The foundation of that alternative society is what he came to call "community universities," learning institutes that resides at the literal heart of self-determining communities.

Borsodi's objective was learning and living. These are highly complementary and synergetic. He was one of the first to understand what we now call systems thinking. Learning, however, is foundational. It applies, as Borsodi made clear, to all aspects of living. I have, therefore, decided to devote this book to his learning system.

My objective, while not strictly scholarly, is to fully describe Borsodi's educational system. The evolution of that system occurs across a series of books, writings, seminars and lecture, and above all projects. These range from his 1929 *This Ugly Civilization*, to his 1968 *Seventeen Problems of Man and Society*. Always practical, it includes his development of his School of Living and the University of Melbourne. It also includes the complimentary themes of his seminal economic theory and his advocacy of the principle of decentralism.

Borsodi's collected works represent a lot of pages of text, tightly reasoned, statistically supported. Most of his books are out of print, rare and costly. They are all, however, now available in digital format to be downloaded at no cost. My effort is to attempt a workable summary of these thousands of pages. I feel it is necessary to get the essential ideas and facts on paper, to restore the legacy itself. Summarization and interpretation are still needed. This material will be further developed. It is our intent to promote the establishment of community universities with the type of holistic and integral program of learning Borsodi proposed.

There will be some duplication in the opening chapters, the background of this work, in these two books. This book, due to the contingencies of the time, should be considered a beta draft. Much of it still could use a final professional edit.

My thanks must be expressed to Bob Flatley and my wife Priscilla. Bob and his wife Kelle live the life Borsodi advocated, a homestead. Bob introduced me to Borsodi, and as editor of the School of Living newspaper, *Green Revolution*, he encouraged my early research and edited and illustrated the long series of articles published in the GR over the years. We have had many long conversations about the development of this book and share a dream about where it might go.

My wife has encouraged and supported my work and passion over the decades. She is also a serious researcher and writer, a master genealogist. That research has helped shape the heretofore untold story of Borsodi's early life, correcting errors and inconsistencies in existing works. She has also done editing on many of the chapters.

Seth Wheeler and Howard Bailey have also lent an attentive ear, reviewed chapter manuscripts and provided insightful feedback.

This book is an independent project by the author for the purpose of inviting others to explore, research and develop Borsodi's system.

The Legacy of Ralph Borsodi

Ralph Borsodi was an outstanding leader of what has been called the New Agrarian movement – the precursor to our current sustainability movement. He was a practical innovator and, as you will see in the next few pages, his list of accomplishments is long and impressive. He had great ideas, he wrote fourteen books and innumerable articles, but he also walked his talk.

Borsodi's time was one of dramatic changes and recurrent crises. While essentially capitalist, he found fault with the then emerging industrial system and its economic, social, and psychological effects. We could do better, he believed. His story includes the Great War (World War I) followed by a deadly viral epidemic, a succession of economic downturns culminating in the Great Depression, and a transition from traditional values with the resulting loss of community and rise of alienation. A new political movement emerged briefly that highlighted this shift and raised the cry for a more ordered way of life. Borsodi's career, his calling, was to make sense of sweeping change and offer an alternative – the good life.

From what we know, Ralph Borsodi was an extraordinary personality. He was of average height, slightly built and balding. He had presence, a steady gaze, a resonate and commanding voice with a slight eastern European accent. He was born in Vienna and came to the US with his father at about age five. He was brilliant, well-informed, and articulate. He was a voracious reader with a retentive mind, absorbed details and summarized vast bodies of work. His attention to detail could be exhausting. He was passionate; you might say driven. He was a man of integrity and principles – he clearly believed in what he offered. He was clearly morally driven. He was a humanitarian. He was polite, thoughtful and compassionate, but he could be direct and candid. He was a man of action and prone to act decisively. He could be devasting in debate. He had enduring friendships and was respected by many distinguished persons. He was an indominable experimenter and innovator and he faced disappointment and frustration with firm resolve. Many times, he shrugged off setbacks and went on to the next project.

Flight From the City

In 1920, with a serious economic recession and flu pandemic following World War I, Ralph Borsodi relocated his family from New York City to a small farm near Suffern, New York, where they established what became a model homestead. They called it Dogwoods. Borsodi pioneered appropriate technology which he developed to take the drudgery out of routine work. He made a careful economic study of homesteading and demonstrated that a family could produce its own food organically and fabricate other products in less time than it would take them to earn the money to buy them. The family raised their food organically, and the quality of everything they produced was far higher than factory products. Their homestead was both secure and healthful.

Borsodi chose Suffern because it was a short commute from his business in New York City where he worked as a consulting economist with expertise in retail trade and advertising and with major clients on Wall Street. He was also an accountant, and his first

book was a practical guide to accounting to help small businesses achieve greater fiscal resiliency.

Borsodi became a pioneering consumer advocate and wrote two books in this field during the 1920s. In 1929 he published a more generalized critique of modern industrialization in *This Ugly Civilization*[1]. In that book he included a report about his family homestead and wrote about the need for an educational program to help people achieve a higher standard of quality in their lives; not just material quality but also an elevated philosophical state – something more along the line that Emerson had called self-reliance.

Economic Crisis

This Ugly Civilization was published on the eve of the Great Depression. Borsodi said he saw it coming. The book was first serialized in a popular national magazine. As the Depression deepened, Borsodi's publisher asked him for a handbook on homesteading. This was published in 1933 as *Flight From The City*.

In 1933 Borsodi was invited to consult with the Dayton, Ohio subsistence homesteading program. Dayton was one of the leaders in a movement across the country to help displaced workers and their families achieve greater self-sufficiency by moving back to the land and starting small family homesteads. Borsodi worked to develop a program for a network of homesteading communities around Dayton. Eventually, the US Congress appropriated money, the Roosevelt Administration created a Subsistence Homestead Division, and the local homesteading programs across the country were taken over by the Federal bureaucracy. Unfortunately, that program was one of the New Deal's failures.

Borsodi returned to Suffern in July 1934 disappointed but not discouraged. In September 1934 he launched an organization to support his work, his School of Living, formally incorporated in New York.

Some ten years earlier, once the Borsodi's had established their homestead, they invited friends to visit them on weekends to learn to start their own homesteads. Borsodi knew that city dwellers needed knowledge and skills to get started. He also understood they needed to adjust their values for a rural and self-sufficient, resilient life; they needed a philosophy to live by. Borsodi had called this "quality mindedness" in *This Ugly Civilization*.

Borsodi understood that land was a key factor in homesteading. As a student of Henry George and a leader in the Georgist movement, he had long believed that in order for land to become available for common people, it would need to be taken out of speculation and put into public trust. Given the limited progress in land reform and the ill-starred record of the Roosevelt administration in this regard, Borsodi developed a private land trust. This was another of his pioneering and innovative accomplishments. This model has inspired many others across the country down to the present day. It has, indeed, become an institution to provide low-income housing in urban areas.

Borsodi formed a foundation to acquire funds for land trusts. He purchased 40 acres on Bayard Lane near Suffern and established 16 homesteaders. The homesteaders acquired their land under lease. The buildings remained the property of the homesteaders.

[1] A new edition of *This Ugly Civilization* was published by Kevin Slaughter in 2019. It includes a new introduction written by Bill Sharp.

At the center of the Bayard Lane community, Borsodi reserved four acres and in 1936 erected a headquarters building for his School of Living. Over the course of the next few years, until US entry into World War II, Borsodi and his supporters developed a remarkable enterprise. They organized another homestead community, and inspired others, provided an extensive education program, developed several craft enterprises, produced a stack of publications about homesteading and promoted the program, its values and ideals, across the country.

In 1942 Borsodi submitted a paper to St. John's College, whose president supported Borsodi's School of Living, in which he proposed a model for a self-sufficient college. St. John's had been hard hit by the war. Borsodi proposed they form an agrarian community and detailed how it would be organized to provide the institution with most of its own needs. St. John's awarded Borsodi a master's degree for the effort. Borsodi also drafted a peace plan during the war years that anticipated the United Nations; except it was a decentralized model and not a world government.

Decentralist Prophet

If there was a core principle to Borsodi's program, it was what he called decentralism. In *This Ugly Civilization*, Borsodi addressed the problem of centralization. Business, the economy, government, education, etc., had become increasingly large-scaled and centrally managed by impersonal bureaucracies. Centralization had accelerated during World War I, to an even greater degree during the Roosevelt New Deal, and dramatically with World War II. There was a small but vocal movement in the US and abroad that opposed centralization; then and to this day. It is in no small part based on Jefferson's ideal of an agrarian democracy governed by a well-educated citizenry. Personal liberty and centralization are not compatible.

In 1937 Borsodi, Herbert Agar and Chauncey Stillman started a decentralist journal *Free America*. It had a respectable mail list of 4,000. All three served as editors until Agar and Stillman, both US Navy Reserve officers, were called into service with America's entry into the War. Borsodi became a recognized leader of the decentralist movement. During the war years he also titled the School of Living newsletter *The Decentralist*.

Borsodi was not a primitivist. Indeed, as noted, he was a pioneer in appropriate technology. He believed that a family could produce 2/3 of its needs with a part-time homestead and do so more efficiently and economically than the factory system. Borsodi considered the remaining one-third of the industrial establishment (albeit smaller establishments more widely dispersed across the country) to be necessary for the good of society at large. Home production gave the family security, self-reliance, pride and cohesion. It made the family the foundation of human society as Borsodi believed it was intended to be. The productive family was the building block of localized, self-governing, communities. Decentralization of the economy and associated government machinery would restore greater individual liberty.

Borsodi developed a systematic economy for the family-centered enterprise, as a national standard, in his *Prosperity and Security* (1939).

Education and Living

During World War II, Borsodi continued to develop a comprehensive and effective educational program. His seminars were well attended.

In *This Ugly Civilization*, Borsodi listed a number of barriers to achieving the good life. These were the key topics of his emerging educational program. He was troubled, however, by the subject-centered structure of education. He did not believe that narrow specialization could adequately resolve problems at either the social or individual level.

The alternative slowly evolved. People naturally came to Borsodi to consult with him about problems. He had the habit of carrying 4 x 6-inch note cards in his jacket pocket and made notes about his conversations. He also made notes about issues he found in his reading. About the time he had 1,000 of his note cards, being analytical by nature, he sorted them into a set of categories. It took several years, but he eventually settled on a list of problem statements – problems he found to be universal to all people in all times and places.

Borsodi's credo came to be expressed simply in two short statements (1940):

> *Believing that the full development of each human being is the supreme value, the School of Living has as its primary purpose to assist adults in their study and use of the accumulated wisdom of mankind.*
>
> *Believing that such study and use of wisdom is best facilitated by being related to the universal and perpetual living experience of human beings, the School of Living aims to assist adults in becoming aware of and the defining the major problems of living common to all people.*

With this credo Borsodi accomplished two important objectives. First, he established the universality of human concerns. Second, he provided for a continuation of human experience through the generations with his approach to accessing the accumulated wisdom of the human race – all of it, East and West, classical and modern.

In 1948 Borsodi published his seminal *Education and Living*. With it he formally introduced his problem-centered educational system. There were then thirteen universal problems. He used this structure to organize his seminars and the School of Living library into a life-long adult learning program.

No small part of the book was his analysis of the problems of modern education. It was centralized, standardized, designed to support urban industrial society, and inadequate in other ways. Borsodi's was by no means a lone voice in critiquing a then emerging progressive educational system.

Borsodi was also not alone in advocating a return to traditional, agrarian and family-centered values and practices. But he proposed something new with his problem-centered framework and related programs. He believed there was an optimal level of life for all people. He called it "normal" living. By that he didn't mean average. He meant a life free of the restrains of urban and industrial culture. He meant life as an optimal human being. He went into considerable detail about the good life for individuals, families and communities. The argument is built on the decentralist theme: smaller is better.

Transition

In 1949 Borsodi's beloved wife Myrtle Mae died after a long battle with cancer.

About that time three old friends from Dayton acquired land in trust for a community near Melbourne, Florida. They invited him to form a new School of Living there. And there he met Clare Kittridge, also recently widowed. In 1950 they were married, he sold Dogwoods and they built a house at Melbourne Village. Borsodi continued to offer his seminars there.

In 1952 Ralph and Clare embarked on a cruise around the world. They visited one of his sons in Spain. Borsodi then spent a number of months touring Asia and talking to leaders there about the impact of western industrialization. Subsequently he published *The Challenge of Asia*.

Returning to Melbourne, Borsodi and friends worked to create a university based on his problem-centered method. He also started a new journal, the *Journal of Praxiology*. The Journal printed two university catalogs. Borsodi provided a detailed description of the University of Melbourne program in chapters appended to *The Challenge of Asia* which was published by the University Press.

A campus was acquired, and a building constructed, and the university was officially opened in September 1957. It had one full-time and some 30–40 part-time students. Borsodi served as Chancellor for about a year and then turned the reins over to Dr. Willis Nutting who had taken a leave from Notre Dame University to work with Borsodi developing the University. Nutting, later returning to Notre Dame, considered the program a success and continued to teach it.

In 1958 Borsodi was invited to India for a short tour. Gandhi, like Borsodi, was an outspoken advocate of decentralization. Borsodi's Indian friends asked him to prepare a statement of his view on decentralism. This was published in 1958 as the "Pan-Humanist (later Decentralist) Manifesto." In it Borsodi proposed a robust program to develop educational leaders for a global, revolutionary movement.

Following this statement, Borsodi was invited to stay for an extended period. He was encouraged to continue his work by a university established by Gandhian educators and set up much like what he had proposed for St. John's. He remained for two years.

Borsodi requested his research files be sent to him in India and settled in to compile a text for his problem-centered educational system. It was eventually published in India in 1963 as *The Education of the Whole Man*. The "Forward" was written by the then President of India. This book represented an important advancement of his system built on the developments at Melbourne and the enthusiastic support of his Indian friends.

The Education of the Whole Man fully develops each universal problem (then 14 in number) but of greater importance integrated the system. It established Borsodi as a pioneer in general systems thinking and integral education.

Mildred Loomis

The post-World War II years put the School of Living on two tracks. In 1945 Borsodi moved the School of Living headquarters, library and programs from Suffern to Mildred

Loomis's homestead, Lane's End, near Dayton, Ohio. Borsodi and Loomis had formed a natural and highly productive partnership that lasted to the end of their respective lives.

Mildred was a graduate student at Columbia in 1932 when a professor gave her a copy of Borsodi's *This Ugly Civilization*. She considered it a bombshell and went to visit him at Dogwoods. Returning to Dayton after graduation she was likely instrumental in introducing Dayton leaders to the book; resulting in Borsodi's invitation to organize homesteading communities. Mildred participated in that program.

In 1939 Mildred joined Borsodi at the School in Suffern for one year. She then married John Loomis and they settled at Lane's End and established a model homestead along Borsodi's lines that throughout their lives produced the majority of their food needs and a small cash income. Mildred had become a trustee of the School. In 1945 she assumed the role of Director of Education. That year she started a new bi-weekly newsletter, *The Interpreter*. With Borsodi's increasing involvement with his wife's health, writing *Education and Living*, later move to Melbourne, and then to India, Mildred became the de facto director of the School of Living, a job she would continue for the next 40 years until her death.

Mildred focused on publications and programing. This allowed Borsodi to focus on refining his educational program. She was also the lead advocate of his problem-centered system. *The Interpreter* was organized according to this system. Mildred organized seminars and study programs on the universal problems. She was also an outspoken advocate of decentralism.

Mildred's mission became a "Green Revolution," a new agrarian revolution, and that meant homesteading. Half the members of the School at that time were homesteaders. The idea for a Green Revolution had been around since the founding of the School of Living. In 1963 Mildred changed the name of the School's newsletter to *Green Revolution*. The articles were about living on the land and included Borsodi's education for living[2]. In 1965 she published her own basic homesteading manual *Go Ahead and Live*.

From about that time Mildred, in her mid-sixties, knew that she would need to turn over the reins of the School of Living to a new generation and begin the work to establish yet another School of Living headquarters community. She accomplished that in 1967 with the founding of the Heathcote Center in Maryland. John Loomis died the following year and she began to shut down Lane's End.

Exeter

Borsodi became seriously ill in India and was twice hospitalized. While he was in India, Clare had purchased a house in Exeter, New Hampshire which was close to her children. In 1961 Borsodi returned and settled at Exeter. He was 72. Exeter proved an ideal environment for him. The town culture was dominated by the Phillip Exeter Academy, and it was only a few minutes from the University of New Hampshire. Recovering from his illness he became engaged in a variety of activities and made many new friends.

With his return from India, Mildred and Borsodi renewed a close collaboration. As his health recovered, she assisted him in sorting his research notes from India. They

[2] The current School of Living organization ceased publication of *Green Revolution* in 2018.

increasingly collaborated on the idea of the need for a revolutionary change; not violent, not red, but green – natural, communal and peaceful. There was a sense of change in the air; not only the restlessness of the young but of a transformative epoch in history. A new literature on human potentiality was appearing, and it was very consistent with Borsodi's mission.

It is perhaps more than coincidental that the first volume of *Green Revolution* and *The Education of the Whole Man* were published the same year, 1963. *The Education of the Whole Man* served as an important new text for dealing with the dramatic changes of the day; with protests and turmoil, and political and economic instability. It was an acutely problematic time. Both Borsodi and Mildred went into high gear and the coming year they produced some of their most important work.

There were several major new organizational projects. The first of these was the land trust. Borsodi had been a pioneer in land trust. He picked up that work again at Exeter and in 1967 he and friends incorporated the International Independence Institute (III) International Foundation for Independence (IFI was chartered in Luxemburg). They established an office and staff in Exeter. Borsodi traveled and worked with supporters in Europe and India. Collaborators continued to develop this model over the years, and it has had a major influencer over the decades.

Also, in 1967, Borsodi published a small book, *The Definition of Definition*, in which he addressed the problem of a lack of common definition of the words we use. This was a text intended to support his major work in progress. In 1968 Borsodi completed his *Seventeen Problems of Man and Society*. This book settled the number of universal problems at 17 and provided a master index of ideas and ideologies, references to the accumulated knowledge of humankind, that could be consulted to develop solutions. With this book Borsodi completed a three-part framework he had proposed in 1948. And yet it was but the introduction to what he hoped would be a separate volume for each of the seventeen problems.

Borsodi and Loomis again accelerated their work giving seminars and conferences on the Seventeen Problems and a variety of social issues. Several conference publications and a variety of training materials were developed including *Toward an Adequate Human Futur*e (1971) and *Moving Into the Front Ranks of Change* (1974), both edited by Mildred. There was also an update of Borsodi's *Inflation is Coming* to address the runaway inflation of that time. It was about this time that the University of New Hampshire awarded Borsodi an honorary doctorate.

Borsodi launched another project to address the problem of inflation; he established a pioneering local currency at Exeter in 1973.

Borsodi continued to speak, hold seminars and consult to the end of his life. After a brief hospitalization, he died October 29, 1977, just short of his 90th birthday.

Into the Sunset

From about 1963 until she closed Lane's End in 1968, Mildred worked diligently to insure the Borsodi legacy. Moving to Heathcote, she worked to turn over the school to a

new generation. For the next several years she also traveled, spent time with Borsodi in Exeter and with her family in Iowa. There was no retirement for Mildred.

The youth counterculture was a mixed blessing. The Hippies, by and large, were not interested in hard study, or for that matter, hard work. They were "doing their own thing." With the frustratingly high turnover rate, building community was a daunting challenge.

In 1975 Mildred moved to Deep Run Farm near York, Pennsylvania to start yet another new School of Living. Indeed, she worked to create a network of new Schools across the country and hoped for a West Coast center. She simultaneously managed the affairs of the School of Living, worked to organize a community at Deep Run and established the Borsodi Memorial Library at Deep Run in 1982. She continued to edit the *Green Revolution* and she wrote. In 1980 she published *Decentralism: Where It Came From, Where is it Going?* In 1982 came *Alternative Americas*. In 1986 she collected and edited the stories for *Borsodi as I Knew Him*. She completed the manuscript for the biography *Ralph Borsodi: Reshaping Modern Culture*, which was published posthumously in 1992.

Mildred suffered a stroke in 1984 and her health declined. She died September 18, 1986; she was 86 years old. With her death, Deep Run was sold, and the library and records were dispersed. Although she was surrounded by loving and stalwart friends, no successor appeared, and over the years the legacy she had tried to preserve went into neglect.

Restoring the Legacy

In 2010, Bob Flatley, then editor of the *Green Revolution* and cofounder of Transition Centre, and I begin to restore the Borsodi's legacy. I had met Bob a year or so before as I started work on the Transition Towns model. He was a homesteader in Mildred's sense of the term, living on a School of Living land trust property. He introduced me to Borsodi's work, and I found it intriguing for a number of reasons. It certainly seemed to warrant restoration. I began researching Borsodi and Loomis and published articles in *Green Revolution*. I also gave a number of presentations and workshops on the material and especially the link between the Borsodi/Loomis legacy and the Transition Towns model. Transition Center grew out of this blend of ideas. We located and acquired long out-of-print books which Bob digitalized and placed online for ready access at no cost. I explored the Borsodi archives at the University of New Hampshire. A fortuitus gift of old issues of *Green Revolution* from the Mary and Lloyd Danzeisen estate, former friends of Mildred's in Ohio and trustees of the School of Living, filled in a lot of gaps, particularly about her life and work.

As this work reached fruition, I was delighted to be contacted by a growing list of people interested in the Borsodi legacy. With the 100th anniversary of the Borsodis settling on their homestead in 2020, it seems appropriate and opportune to celebrate the Borsodi/Loomis legacy.

We believe that this legacy is of great importance. Borsodi's star rose during a period of crises, and we were experiencing an unprecedented crisis on this anniversary date. Perhaps this work can be of benefit to those seeking an alternative to the way things

seem to be going. Certainly, there are tools of considerable value to those who wish to take the time and trouble to learn to use them.

The Borsodi legacy, as suggested, is a cornerstone of the Transition Centre program. We have added three new components to the basic framework. The first is Resilient Communities. This is a community-scale model, starting with existing communities that have either lost or wish to insure a more secure, localized, and adaptable economic system. Resiliency is the capacity to not only adapt but get good at it. The second is Foodshed Strategy which seeks to expand the scope of resiliency to a naturally defined regional level appropriate for climate, geography and water supplies.

We also recognize the vital importance of effective training and educational programs, particularly for community leadership and economic development. Community development requires a businesslike approach in terms of planning and organizing. It must pay its own way.

These are increasingly complex, verging on chaotic, times. It is clear that we need a form of education appropriate to address emerging conditions. Borsodi's problem centered and integral approach to learning, for the purpose of action, has considerable merit. It is a major component of our approach. But so too, I must add, are the works of Alfred Korzybski, founder of General Semantics, Buckminster Fuller and others. As Borsodi intended, we draw on an accumulation of wisdom, leadership and inspiration to produce an integral model for moving into this evolving era in human history.

Chapter 1
Early Life

Ralph Borsodi was born, according to his draft registration, 20 December 1888 in Vienna, Austria. He arrived in New York about his fifth year. His father, William Borsodi, was born in 1858 in Hungary, immigrated to the US probably in 1889 and was naturalized August 1896. William Borsodi was a successful printer, magazine publisher and an expert in advertising. He published a number of advertising guides for different businesses (available on Amazon). Borsodi's mother apparently died in Europe. William married Laura Cahen in July 1898 in Manhattan (she died April 1949). Ralph apparently had two half-brothers, Albert A. Borsodi, born 1899, NY, died August 1934, NYC; and William Howard Borsodi, born 1901 in NYC. Also found in the census record was an uncle, Morris Borsodi, a musician, born 1868, Hungary, who married Anna V. Ungar, 28 April 1936, Bronx, New York.

My guess is that coming from eastern Europe, their names were anglicized as was common with immigrants.

Ralph first appeared in the US in the 1900 census as a boarding scholar at the Gerlach academy in New Jersey along with his brother Victor Howard who was born 26 August 1885 in Austria. Both, the census record stated, had been in the US for seven years. Victor later moved to Houston, Texas before 1917, and was a "U.S. Government Contractor." He became a successful Texas oilman and a founder of the Humble Oil corporation.

Borsodi's time at Gerlach Academy may have been his only formal schooling. The Academy, incorporated in 1895 by A. D. Gerlach, was located next to the ocean in a large building that had once been a "Queen Anne" style hotel. It was advertised as a military boarding school to "[p]repare for American and European Universities." Another advertisement stated: "Getting ready for the battle of life includes something more than mental equipment …. It means the training of boyhood into noble manhood."

No instructor had more than six pupils in a class. Tuition was $500 per year for year-round boarding with vacations at Christmas and Easter. It should be noted that $500 in 1900 was about the average annual income in the US and the equivalent of over $15,000 in 2020. Since William had both of his sons there, it would be assumed he was doing well in business. Parents were expected to take Thanksgiving dinner with the headmasters, instructors and pupils at the school. Pupils were required to write weekly to their parents. They wore uniforms, arose with a bugle call at 6:00 AM to fall into line in the upper hall. No disobedience or insubordination was tolerated. The school building later burned to the ground in 1908 and most of the records were lost.

Ralph began asserting his independence at an early age. By 1903, when he was 15, he had his own apartment in New York City. He apparently didn't get along with his stepmother. She was too rigid, he said. The father was often away on business. Ralph learned typesetting, publication and advertising and earned his living working for his father's business.

In 1910, at age 21, Borsodi's father sent Ralph to Rice, Texas (near Dallas) to dispose of several hundred acres of land. While there Borsodi bought and edited a local newspaper and used it to discuss the land problem. William, who had worked in land reform in Hungary, was a serious follower of the American economist Henry George (more below). Ralph was also heavily engaged with the movement and met many of its leaders.

After the Borsodi land in Texas was sold, Ralph returned to NYC. This was about the time Ralph met Myrtle Mae and they were married in 1911. Myrtle Mae, born and raised on a farm in Iowa, had moved to New York City and was working at the William Borsodi company.

During the 1920s Ralph began working as a consulting economist in New York City. Some of his clients were Wall Street brokers and investors. As an expert on marketing and distribution, he established himself as a cost accountant. Cost accounting was then not only in demand by business but also by radical economists. Cost accountants laid the foundation of the consumer movement.

In 1917 Ralph registered for the draft. He was 5'10", 150 pounds and had no disabilities. He was passed over for selection likely for his age (approaching 30) and two children. His occupation was listed as: Advertising Writer, Self-Employed, 28 East 23rd Street. He then lived at 440 West 25th Street, New York, NY – just a short walk from his office.

There has been some speculation about Borsodi's religious background although it appears throughout his life he was essentially an atheist. One writer suggested a Jewish heritage. Since his father died in Europe, we have no record of his burial. Perhaps only by coincidence we often find the Borsodi name listed in American obituaries as Catholic. His brother Victor was married and buried as a Presbyterian.

It is reported that William went to Hungary in 1919 for reasons unknown and did not return to the US. The business went to Ralph's half-brother William and continued to prosper after the elder William left. Ralph, as noted, was already engaged in business as an economist and was beginning to realize his vision of homesteading.

In 1920 the Borsodi's bought first seven and then an addition 12-18 acres in Ramapo Township, a few miles from Suffern, NY where they established a homestead. A short walk from the railroad station, the Suffern location gave him ready access to his professional work in NYC.

In 1922 Ralph published a successful book, *The New Accountin*g, written to help small businesses achieve greater self-reliance in the management of their finances. The book led to an offer by a textile fashion publisher, E. L. Fairchild, and Ralph worked for them for at least six years. In 1928 he started the Borsodi Analytical Bureau, which conducted economic analysis, developed forecasts and presented business seminars.

In 1923 Borsodi became a pioneer of consumer advocacy when he wrote a critique of the American advertising industry in his book *National Advertising Versus Prosperity*. In 1927 he wrote *The Distribution Age*, a critique of the massive factory system that had grown up before, during and following World War I. He asserted that both advertising and

distribution of goods add significantly and unnecessarily to consumer cost and reduces the quality of goods.

Here is an interesting item about Borsodi from an article, "The New Trend in Distribution" in *The Journal of the American Statistical Association*, 1929.

> *"One of the most successful dinner meetings of the New York Branch of the American Statistical Association was held at the Fraternity Club, New York City, on October 17, 1929. Over 300 were present.*
>
> *"Mr. Ralph Borsodi, director of the Fairchild Analytical Bureau[3], spoke on the critical phase of mass distribution. One of the chief points that Mr. Borsodi brought out in his discussion was that the chain store has no monopoly and that the merged or consolidated organizations in the past have been successful largely due to monopoly control. This has been particularly true in the previous periods of consolidations, characterized first by the Standard Oil Company of 1870 and second by the United State Steel Corporation in 1897. Both these corporations grew to their present magnitude largely due to monopoly control which is lacking in the chain store development.*
>
> *"Mr. Borsodi stated that the mass distributors have not the mines, patents, franchises or trademarks to protect them, as is the case of monopoly in the production field. He further contended that scientific management is essential and necessary to any successful development in the chain store field.*

I found the "Borsodi Analytical Bureau" cited in other articles in 1929, 1931 and 1932.

Ralph Borsodi was an extraordinary personality. He was of average height, slightly built and balding. He had presence, a steady gaze, a resonate and commanding voice with a slight eastern European accent. He was brilliant, well-informed, and articulate. He was a voracious reader with a retentive mind, absorbed details quickly and summarized vast bodies of work. His attention to detail could be exhausting. He was passionate; you might say, driven. He was a man of integrity and principles – he clearly believed in what he offered. He was morally driven. He was a humanitarian, polite, thoughtful and compassionate, but he could be direct and candid and could be devasting in debate. He was a man of action and prone to act decisively. He had enduring friendships and was respected by many distinguished persons. He was an indominable experimenter and innovator and often faced disappointment and frustration, but he always shrugged off setbacks and went on to the next project. He reportedly retained these qualities to the end of his life.

In 1929 Borsodi published a keystone book: *This Ugly Civilization*, in which he wrote three important themes. First was a summary critique of American urban industrial society. Second, the first public report of his homesteading experience. Third, the idea of an educational program to help people achieve a good life.

Borsodi firmly believed industrial civilization has an ugly side; actually, several ugly aspects. Factories tended to be ugly by nature; industry pillaged the environment, and cities were squalid. Industry also has an ugly social aspect. It wasn't the machine itself to which he objected, but rather the effect on society due to the abuses of the machine and factory system. Borsodi saw the lives of the workers consumed by this system and the lives of the citizens who became dependent upon the products. Borsodi already saw American

[3] It is not clear why his company was referred to as the Fairchild Analytical Bureau.

capitalism moving towards crisis and this book, published just before the onset of the Great Depression, warned of its coming.

Borsodi reported the results of his family's experience homesteading in some detail and made an attractive case for living on the land. This is the part of the book that seems to have inspired the most people who read it. As an economist and accountant, he presented the numbers and proved that a family could readily produce food and other household products in less time than it would take to earn the money to buy them with the added benefit that the quality was better, and the pride and satisfaction are in themselves rewards.

Borsodi was the pioneer in appropriate technology, decades ahead of E. F. Schumacher. He ran an electric power line to the house, bought appliances and attached motors to a number of farm machines. The first of these was a small mill for grinding flour and animal feed. He installed an electric pump at the well and indoor plumbing when that was rare in old farms. His objective was to take the drudgery out of chores.

Borsodi's homestead ideal was a place close to a town or city where work could be found. Suffern was then only a half hour commute from New York city (less than half of what it is today). We know that Borsodi continued to work in business until at least 1934 when he opened his School of Living near the homestead at Suffern.

The Education of a "Libertarian" Radical

The core of Borsodi's work was education. Learning was always a major part of his life. Like many others of the time, he believed that people had lost understanding of the virtues that defined traditional culture. To restore it required a proper education. He devoted a large part of *This Ugly Civilization* to education.

It has become clear to me there was an underlying ideal in Borsodi's system about the individual's capacity to lead a self-reliant life. It wasn't a utopian ideal; it was rather something he and others felt lost in the process of building an industrial culture. This attitude may have been formed at Gerlach. If a noble spirit was the objective of Gerlach, then we can say Borsodi was a good student. He pursued what can only be described as a noble spirit for both himself and others.

Borsodi has often been called a libertarian. In this section's title, I've put the word "libertarian" in quotes. Quote marks can be used to indicate words that need to be evaluated thoughtfully. Frankly, I'm not sure what definition of that term might fit Borsodi. It would have to be philosophical, not political. I've found little record of him taking a partisan position – mostly his intense critique of Roosevelt's New Deal administration – a problem of centralization. Borsodi's attitude was due in part to his disappointment with the Roosevelt administration's mishandling of the homesteading program.

Borsodi was perhaps more correctly described as a "decentralist," and indeed a leader of that movement. His critique of capitalism wasn't the market but rather centralization of control of the economy and also of the government, of education and for that matter hierarchical and dogmatic religion. He was not anti-capitalist. He scorned the idea of socialism – essentially centralist to the core. He advocated the American style of individual liberty. In this sense he reflected the values of many of the Founding Fathers. He

also advocated for family and community. He believed families and communities could take care of their own affairs without state interference, and without massive industry dominating the local economy.

Mildred Loomis, in her biography *Ralph Borsodi: Reshaping Modern Culture*, opened the second chapter with a quote from George Washington: "Government is not reason; it is not eloquence – it is force. Like fire, it is a dangerous servant and fearful master, never for a moment should it be left to irresponsible action." In that quote, and one from Thoreau: "that government is best that governs least," she captured the essence of Borsodi.

Borsodi's Education

Borsodi was largely self-educated. In other words, he was "out of the box" of conventional conditioning. Borsodi's education was the library – books to be more precise. Borsodi was always a voracious reader. He was a speed reader with a highly retentive memory. Borsodi surrounded himself with books and spent endless hours with them, reading some repeatedly. He haunted the great New York Public Library – a vast resource for scholars. It is clear that he was highly disciplined in his studies.

Borsodi was particularly fond of early American history. His copy of *The Federalist Papers*, Mildred has said, showed much reading. Jefferson appealed to Borsodi as the apostle of freedom and education. Jefferson insisted that a democracy must have a well-educated electorate and considered farm ownership the best qualification and exercise of citizenship. Ranking below the farmer Jefferson placed professionals and craftsmen who owned their own businesses. At the bottom of the list were traders, bankers and manufacturers "whose goal was neither integrity nor craftsmanship, but money." This vision was a cornerstone of Borsodi's philosophy and defined his career.

Borsodi read Thomas Paine closely. Paine, a very common man and a stunning writer, justified the sacrifices needed for the American Revolution for freedom and independence. His books defined the spirit of that struggle for independence, liberation from a remote, aristocratic and arbitrary tyranny. Paine's *Common Sense* was a best seller during the American Revolution. Paine wrote the book not for the educated elite but for the common citizens of the colonies. Paine's own formal education was elementary school level. He was self-educated, learned, and had a gift for writing. He addressed his work to people like himself which speaks to the Jeffersonian ideal of an informed citizenry. de Tocqueville, in the 1830s, described that American literacy in some detail. It did indeed define American democracy. That was important to Borsodi.

Among Mildred's list of writers who she understood had deeply influenced Borsodi, was John Locke, who was an early influence on Jefferson. Borsodi adopted Locke's themes of reason and freedom, the freedom of thought and expression. These were Enlightenment ideals. Locke was an empiricist. He believed what we know and who we become is a product of experience. He did not believe in metaphysics or that we are born with innate ideas. We are the product of Nature's law. He was a rationalist, giving priority to thoughtful reasoning, facts and scientific validation. He believed in economic independence and in ownership of land – much as we find in Jefferson and Henry George and others influenced by Locke. Borsodi advocated such liberalism as a response to the urban-industrial revolution. (I recommend the Wikipedia article on "Classical Liberalism.")

From Rousseau Borsodi took the motto: "Man is born free! But everywhere he is in chains." We are by nature, said Rousseau, free and equal, and freedom from tyranny is a natural right. Rousseau was another Enlightenment leader.

Borsodi talked about two "vigorous Germans," Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. These two philosophers, he acknowledged, represented the darker side of human nature but they were highly realistic and down to earth. They wrote about the effects of the European encounter with industrialism. Borsodi often quoted Nietzsche, particularly in *This Ugly Civilization*.

Nietzsche is a difficult subject for many. Many of his views are anti-liberal and anti-democratic, or so it would seem at first glance. His darker views are in fact an expression of a deep malaise in Europe during his life, a sense of an end of an age and a profound despair that went with it. I believe that Nietzsche's writings were a response to his sense of the failure of both religion – "God is dead" - and the failure of reason. There is a sense of anguish in his work.

Nietzsche was inspired by Emerson. They both sought self-reliance. Both turned to nature for an understanding of the human essence. Both shrugged off the shackles of tradition, of conventional wisdom, and sought to define a new reality for a free, self-determining, individual. But Nietzsche came much later than Emerson. Emerson witnessed the birth of industrialism. Nietzsche, a generation later, saw it becoming a dominant force in Europe.

Borsodi had fundamental disagreements with Locke, Rousseau and the two Germans. He rejected their low opinion of the common man. But he did embrace their emphasis on the importance of disciplined will, sharp intellect and vigorous bodies. Mildred quoted Borsodi saying "Human beings develop through conscious effort for a balance of body, mind and will" – another hallmark of his philosophy and life-work. And it is here that Borsodi is a pioneer. He is an unrecognized innovator in the field of integral or systems thinking, of a holistic view of life. This system came to fruition in Borsodi's seminal *The Education of the Whole Man* (1963). Within a decade "integral education" became a watchword of the human potential movement.

Turning to the influences of the East, Mildred learned that Confucius was Borsodi's chief teacher. In Confucius Borsodi saw a mind trying to penetrate to the causes of social disorder. The path is to get to the root of things, said Confucius, and when this is done the right course opens. To get to the root we must earnestly investigate the world, human nature and the events unfolding around us. This principle, I believe, is the foundation of Borsodi's social criticism.

Order and harmony, said Confucius, are achieved in a sequence that starts with the self, expands to the family, and as understanding grows, extends to the larger world. Mildred quoted an idea from Confucius that Borsodi paraphrased: "The true solution of all social, political and economic questions must begin (but not end) with the 'cultivation of the personal life,' and, 'good habits, good institutions, and all other good things are the by-products of the right education of the individual.'" Here, Mildred footnoted, was the basis for the goal and structure of Borsodi's later work in adult education – a work she was

to take a leading role in promoting. In a sense, Confucius defines much of the structure of Borsodi's *This Ugly Civilization* and later *Education and Living* (1948)

Mildred noted the names of other writers who influenced Borsodi's philosophy. They included: Emerson, Blake, Madison, the Bible, the Bhagavad Gita, Aristophanes, Sophocles, Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, Copernicus, Comenius, Galileo, Newton, Pestalozzi, Oberlin, Froebel, Gruntvig, Thoreau, Sun Yat Sen and "scores of other favorites." He seems to have had a deep affection for Gandhi. I don't doubt that books by all of these writers and philosophers were in the now lost School of Living library. Borsodi assembled that library for the purpose of providing people with the basic knowledge they needed to define and solve their problems, to learn in order to lead the good life. Unfortunately, we have not yet discovered a complete list of those books.

The library of the School of Living was started with books from Borsodi's personal library. Its headquarters, completed in 1936, had a library room with shelving for hundreds of books. While working there in 1939, Mildred read many of them and discussed them with Borsodi. She reported one extended conversation she had with him about the English arts and crafts leaders including Eric Gill, Hillaire Belloc, John Ruskin, William Morris and others. She said that Borsodi knew them well. He told her that his own system was "substantially but not entirely" like theirs; mostly due to his view that they only covered four of the universal problems. I believe a good understanding of the British and American arts and crafts movement is useful in understanding Borsodi. That movement was another protest against the dehumanizing influence of the industrial revolution, a return to a more natural, communal level of living, of good books, of crafts that are finely designed and wrought by hand. Of greater importance, was a self-determined life based on learning and reasoning.

Understanding Borsodi's mentors is important because he did little to summarize his own philosophy. Mildred said it helped her understand Borsodi's goals and his commitment to them, his concern for ethics and reason, and his vigorous schedule of work and action. I couldn't agree more. In short, if you are interested in Borsodi's work and wish to understand it more fully, you have a lot of reading and analyzing to do.

What would a good library contain? During the 1950s there were some 4,500 books at Borsodi's University of Melbourne library. They included classics from around the world and contemporary literature. About that time a wave of new publications appeared about human potentiality. Adding selected new books, we are still only talking about a small library; likely fewer than ten thousand books. For more serious scholarship, there are large public and university libraries, but a core library is both necessary and sufficient for daily study.

Few of us want to read hundreds, let alone thousands, of books. Borsodi never intended that. He organized his library according to his universal problems structure to make them more accessible. Once we have a problem statement in mind, we check the jacket description, table of context and perhaps index, to see what is applicable. Today, digital indexing makes that much easier.

Nonetheless, we each need a solid background of understanding of the accumulated wisdom of humanity: history, literature, arts, sciences, and social sciences. Reading is a

sublime art. Reading improves our minds and provides nourishment for our souls. It gives us access to the minds, the lives, the spirit of authors long dead. It brings something about them back to life. That experience shapes our own lives. Indeed, it's not what is in the book as much as what happens in our minds as we read them that is important. And, I have to say, the book is one of the most highly perfected artifacts ever invented. A lot of effort went into making books what they are. A book is an object that provides pleasure in its own right for those who are appreciative. It took a lot of work to make digital tablets readable, but it seems many people still prefer books since printed publication is currently gaining vis-à-vis digital dissemination.

Solving problems requires study, and study takes reading to another level. It requires discipline and method. Whether in our personal lives or work, we have problems to solve and if we don't already know how to do that, we consult books or the internet for information. In short, we know we must learn. Really big problems require more extensive, perhaps exhausting study. Building a business, creating a new technology or application, solving an environmental issue – all require learning, thinking and analyzing, developing plans, and taking action – typically refining our solution as we proceed. Entrepreneurs and CEO's are among the top readers.

A Note on Henry George

We have noted the influence of Henry George on Borsodi and his father, William. Ralph Borsodi was a leading authority on Georgist philosophy. Mildred devoted a thoughtful chapter to Borsodi's involvement with it and found in it much of his motivation, commitment to principle and style of work. Borsodi, she wrote, left school in part to work for the Single Tax Party in New York City. I believe that was when he got his own apartment at age 15. Ralph had a passionate commitment to the Georgist philosophy. He made speeches from a soapbox at city street corners. He edited the newsletter, *The Single Taxer*. In 1919 he was Chair of the organization.

Borsodi also drew on leading Georgist Bolton Hall. Hall and Borsodi's father were friends and Ralph apparently carried on this friendship with Hall for many years and considered Hall a mentor. Hall wrote several influential books on homesteading based on Georgist principles. William Borsodi collaborated with Hall on one of them. Hall gave Borsodi the idea of the three-acre, self-sufficient, family homestead.

The Stage Setting

To understand Ralph Borsodi, I think we need to understand the time and place in which he lived. That he was intensely engaged not only with books but with the life around him from youth is clear. The US and the world economies were growing at an incredible rate. Technology was exploding. The age of the skyscraper had arrived, and buildings suddenly sprung from 25 to 50 stories and kept going.

In 1910, when Borsodi reached his majority, New York City was second (barely) only to London in population at nearly 4.7 million. Much of the traffic was still horse drawn (there were electric trolleys and lighting). The automobile, with Ford going into mass production, was just beginning to take over personal transportation. In 1909 Taft had gone to his Presidential inauguration in a horse drawn buggy. In 1913 Wilson went to his in an

automobile. There were electrical and telephone wires overhead. During World War I vast convoys of ships departed New York with food, men and material for the war. By 1925 New York was the largest city in the world with population over six million and climbing.

The rate of change was awesome; there was a dramatic change from an agrarian to an industrial economy, and Borsodi was at the heart of that drama. In 1893 Frederick Turner announced the end of the American frontier era, the era that marked the expansion of the country from the original colonies to the Pacific. Railroad tracks and telegraph lines crisscrossed the country. In 1892 Andrew Carnegie started his steel enterprise. In 1895 J.P. Morgan opened his financial company to fund industry. In 1896 John D. Rockefeller established the Standard Oil Trust. The list is long. The industrial revolution was in full swing. America was becoming a dominate player in world markets and politics.

Technology was changing the countryside and society. Steam locomotives carried freight all over the country and steam ships carried vast cargos around the world. Sears and Montgomery Ward and other companies made a business of mail and freight delivery, much as Amazon and eBay do today. Canning and refrigeration changed the food system. The telegraph and telephone were the first "internet." Electric elevators made skyscrapers possible. Then airplanes opened the air ocean. The automobile dramatically changed the way we lived. In the 1920s the radio came. Up to that time news, opinions, entertainment and public education came through print and public events and would continue to do so but the influence of radio steadily grew.

Populist and Progressive Reaction

The two ideologies that seem to have shaped Borsodi were the Populist and Progressive movements; and notably the former. Henry George was a cornerstone for these movements, particularly the Populists. As president, Theodore Roosevelt worked to shape a national policy along Populist and Progressive lines. Some of the major ideas that may have influenced Borsodi include:

The Populists

In 1892 a third American political party, the People's Party, or Populist, drew one million votes in the national Presidential elections. The Populist represented the Midwest and agrarianism, another generation of embattled farmers. The tyrant this time wasn't King George but the new aristocracy of American business and industry. There was also strong Populist sympathy in the South where a second branch of the People's Party formed.

Agrarian culture was being ravaged. Farmers once represented a family tenancy and the keystone of the American economic enterprise. The strong new, industrial national economic system worked to the disadvantage of farmers. Farm production costs were largely fixed, and the market was highly variable. Forced into debt, farmers were driven into poverty and off their land. Frederick Turner, in his closing of the American frontier thesis, among others, presented Populism as a reaction against the consequences of economic power and the resultant social stratification. They drew on the egalitarian sentiments of Jeffersonian democracy and the traditional roots of those embattled farmers at Concord for their ideas; they sought a return to earlier virtues.

Many of the Midwesterners were Grangers, farmers who had formed co-operatives to pool their buying power to get wholesale rates and even established factories for making plows and harvesters which were sold to members at cost. They operated their own grain elevators, packing plants, insurance companies and banks. Being pushed into commercial agriculture by national economic trends, the farms had become dependent upon the railroads to get their crops to markets, on banks for frequent loans needed to maintain and develop their farms, and upon a market over which they had no control. The Grangers got several of their states to take over operation of the railroads. To support them, Congress passed the Interstate Commerce Act (1887) and the Sherman Anti-trust Law (1890).

The year 1893 was one of national economic panic. Over 600 banks and more than 150 railroads failed. The gold reserve dropped dangerously. Agricultural prices plummeted below the cost of production and a huge number of farms went into receivership.

The causes of the economic panic of 1893 included ten years of drought, land speculation and rising cost of farming. Half or more of Kansas farmers lost their property. The major parties were doing little for them. Popular leaders appeared who called on the farmers to "raise less corn and more Hell!" Conventions had been formed in both the Midwest and the South and in 1892 they nominated General James B. Weaver of Iowa, a lawyer and former Republican maverick Congressman, as the candidate for President of the US. He drew those 1,000,000 popular votes in 1892.

As the Populist movement gained momentum it advocated the ideas of social critics and visionaries like Henry George, Edward Bellamy and Henry D. Lloyd. The Populist platform opposed monopoly and special privilege and advocated that wealth should belong to those who produced it. They demanded financial reform and sought the coinage of silver money. They wanted to strip the railroads of all land other than that needed for the railbeds, have government take ownership of railroads, telegraph and telephone lines; an eight-hour day, direct election of senators (senators were then elected by the state legislation), and an end to land monopolization. The farmers were joined by miners, workers and other groups who saw free silver as the cure of their economic bondage.

In 1896 the Populist Party chose William Jennings Bryan, a charismatic orator, as their candidate for President. The Republicans fielded William McKinley. McKinley won 7,107,000 popular votes to Bryan's 6,533,000 and 271 to 176 electoral votes. The Populist Party collapsed following the election but some of its ideas prevailed, such as the direct election of US senators. That required an amendment to the US Constitution.

Populism came at the end of a period some historians have called the American Era of Unrest, from 1865 to 1900. The furious pace of change during that period following the Civil War cannot be over emphasized. Industrialization had morphed from a curiosity to become the dominate national economic system. Monopolistic capitalism was a new and very real force in the shaping of American society. Government had not yet found its response to these changes. It was mostly pro-business, or at least "hands off." The Horatio Alger myth was born – a secularization of the protestant work ethic that said hard work, thrift and a stroke of luck could bring wealth and ease. Social Darwinism was a popular dogma. Manifest Destiny was the grand nationalistic credo. America was becoming the

greatest nation on the face of the Earth, and waves of immigrants were pouring into the country seeking freedom and opportunities.

Henry George

Henry George (1839 – 1897) was born in Philadelphia to a family of modest means. At age 15 he went to sea and three years latter landed in San Francisco. He did a little, not very rewarding prospecting in the gold fields. He married and took a job as a typesetter and printer for a San Francisco newspaper. He also contributed articles and gradually developed a reputation in journalism. He and his family nonetheless lived in straightened circumstances for some years. It was as a journalist that he developed his economic criticism.

Visiting New York City, he was deeply moved by the abject squalor of immigrant slums. There was poverty in California but nothing like that of the city slums. In California people still had some, albeit increasingly limited, access to land. In the great cities they had none. In 1879 he published his *Progress and Poverty*, a book that sold 3 million copies (and is still in print and much studied). He argued that the cause of poverty was that land being held by speculators was inaccessible to people who could make a living on it.

George, although he never finished school, became the first America to create a major economic theory. He developed an idea that was called the Single Tax, a tax on the undeveloped value of the land (not of the improvements on the land, including manufactured products which are heavily taxed today, but the land itself). He believed the Single Tax would remove land from speculation and make it available to realize the American credo of opportunity for all. He drew on the works of economic pioneers like Adam Smith and David Ricardo, both of whom it has been suggested, would have likely supported George's theory. Today George's Single Tax is still advocated by economists such as Milton Freedman and Paul Krugman.

Progress and Poverty took George ten years to write. He couldn't find a publisher, so he set the type himself. It took him four months working in his own spare time. The plates were sent to New York City, where the book was printed and immediately sold out.

The question George started with was: Why, in spite of increase in production power, do workers' wages tend to remain a minimum which will give but a bare living? The answer is that economic theory holds that wages are paid out of capital. This is utterly false, he asserted. Wages are, in fact a product of labor. The higher the productivity, the greater labor's contribution to capitol and hence wages should be higher, not lower.

Wealth is a function of land, labor and capital. Land is not only the surface of the Earth but includes the whole material universe outside of us. Land, not capital – as commonly held in his day and ours – is the source of wealth. The key term, however, is labor. Capital is the product of land plus labor. In fact, labor is the source of all wealth for it is only through labor that land can be made productive. Without labor there is no value created. Capital is not the start of the process but rather the end result. Capital may, and should be, used to aid production and capital is increased by a just and equitable return of interest.

By wealth George meant the value gained through employment of land. The connection has more than economic importance. George wrote: "for it is only by having access to land, from which his very body is drawn, that men can come into contact with or use nature."

For George, land was the foundation of a just and equitable society. Land, he maintained, is a natural endowment. It is a common heritage. Land held in speculation makes it too costly for common use. Industrialization changed our relationship to the land. For untold generations farms were the source of livelihood. Once 85% of employment in the US, today less than one percent of our workforce claims farming as an occupation and only two percent of the population live on farms. Cities were founded in agricultural regions, places where there was prime farmland. Development has now covered vast stretches of this land; eliminating farms and orchards by the thousands. That process continues. As a result of the shift from self-subsistence farming to city jobs, industrial nations produced appalling poverty.

George became the third most popular personality in the country and had a large following elsewhere. In 1887 he ran for mayor of New York City. He lost, as would be expected, to the candidate of the Tammany Hall political machine but polled ahead of the charismatic Theodore Roosevelt. George ran again in 1897, against his doctor's advice, as he was in poor health, but died on the eve of the election, virtually certain to have won had he lived.

Borsodi elaborated on and expanded a number of George's key ideas. For example, his innovative response to land became not political reform but the privately held land trust.

Progressivism

The reelection of President McKinley in 1900 heralded a continuation of the Republican program to support the growth of business and industry. Following the Panic of 1893, better times returned to the farmers and to labor. As the new century dawned there was a sense of contentment in the country. Then McKinley was assassinated in September 1901 and Theodore Roosevelt became President.

Roosevelt was already a legend. He was a renowned naturalist and outdoorsman, a well-known face in politics, a dynamic and eccentric figure who could quote at length from literature and whistled the songs of numerous birds. Only three years earlier he became a national hero when he led his Rough Riders, troops he raised in the American West, up San Juan Hill in Cuba during the Spanish American War. Roosevelt was a man of the times. Despite his patrician heritage, his robust health, horsemanship and love of wilderness travel and hunting endeared him to folks who lived on the land. But he was also an accomplished city machine politician.

Although Republican at the time, Roosevelt was not a friend of capital and industry. He sought to moderate big business influence. While he had a sizable following in agrarian America, the Populist, his greatest appeal was the rising middle class, mostly urban – the Progressives. Both farmers and the middle class felt the repression of predatory capitalism. Under his charismatic leadership and the wave of popular sentiment, Roosevelt was able to

forge an alliance of town and farm that would have far greater success than the Populist upheaval.

The Progressives believed in democratic capitalism and a strong central government. They wanted progress to work. But they saw their chance to improve their own lot seriously restricted by the unconstrained power of monopolistic business, particularly by the men of great fortune who had local machine politicians and US Congressmen on their payroll.

The Progressives sought reform. They were advocates of government intervention as a check on predatory capitalism. The press and the intelligentsia rallied to the Progressive cause. Progressivism was less politically confrontational than the Populist Revolt. It thus attracted people with moderate leanings and these shaped much of the response to come. Progressive leadership came from both parties.

The print media was then a major driver of public opinion. There were many popular books on social criticism. American rural sociology was becoming a strong academic voice. The works of European sociologists also became influential, particularly Durkheim, Weber and Simmel. In education and philosophy, the voices of William James and John Dewey were popular. People were looking for ideas.

Newspapers and magazines brought a steady stream of not only news but also opinion. A new radical journalism, which Roosevelt labeled "muckraking," became extremely popular in both newspapers and magazines. It exposed political corruption in the cities. It attacked the "robber barons," monopolists such as John D. Rockefeller and Standard Oil.

Roosevelt led a new charge, up Capitol Hill, to bust the Trusts--the power of the great monopolistic corporations. The time was right. It was the era of urban reform, characterized by Jane Addams, who won the Noble Peace Prize for her work both as a peace advocate and the founder of settlement houses. The Supreme Court, however, a legacy of more conservative administrations, was not a friend of reform. Progressive forces countered with landmark constitutional amendments including the sixteenth, which legalized an income tax, the seventeenth which achieved the Populist goal of popular election of US Senators, the eighteenth, which established prohibition, and the nineteenth, which granted the vote to women.

Theodore Roosevelt and the Commission on Country Life.

Roosevelt took a deep interest in traditional American values. In 1908 he formed a Commission to study the life of the American farmer, family and community. The *Report of the Commission on Country Life* was first published in 1911.

Why Roosevelt formed this Commission is of interest. At the time farming was in the so-called "Golden Age of Agriculture," but it was a troubled paradise. Farming was profitable but not as rewarding as work in the cities. The country was in a flux of industrial and urban development and a comfortable middle class was rapidly growing.

Dissatisfaction with the lack of amenities in the country had become epidemic. Rural residents flocked to the cities seeking better jobs and lifestyles and this alarmed those who saw rural America as not only the economic and social foundation of a

republican way of life but its moral cornerstone. Agrarian values were a foil against the morality of predatory capitalism, big business and the business-oriented Republican Party. At root was the issue of redressing economic inequities by revitalizing the Federal role in regulating companies, conserving natural resources and leveling the political playing field between rural and urban populations.

Roosevelt prefaced the purpose of the Commission in these words: "No nation has ever achieved permanent greatness unless this greatness was based on the well-being of the great farmer class, the men who live on the soil. … There is but one person whose welfare is as vital to the welfare of the whole country as is that of the wage-worker who does manual labor, and that is the tiller of the soil – the farmer."

The Commission held thirty public hearings all over the country, circulated over half a million questionnaires, and held numerous other meetings. The findings of the report included:

- Rural people are socially isolated
- Roads are bad
- Communication poor
- Farm credit needed
- Farm cooperatives needed
- Extension support needed
- Rural schools deplorable

The Commission made three recommendations:

1. Nationalize the agricultural extension service, which was done by the passage of the Smith-Lever Act in 1914
2. Foster the development of agricultural economics and rural sociology in universities, which would provide ongoing surveys to gather information on rural life
3. An ongoing campaign for rural progress.

In short, the Report called for rebuilding a traditional agricultural civilization in America.

How do you make country life attractive? First, of course, farming must be rewarding work and profitable. The farmer should live comfortably and securely. Second, the local economy should be reinforced by small manufactories to provide the needs of the farm community. But the real issue was the relative social isolation of the farmer. This was still the era of horses and buggies, and farms were wide apart. Farmers are also, by definition, self-reliant. They do not readily form the cooperatives needed to enhance social life. In comparison to urban life, these conditions result in a certain "social sterility." True, where the Grange was strong these social needs were better supplied. What else, the Commission asked, could be done to make rural life more attractive?

Schools and churches were at the top of the list of beneficial social agencies. Libraries with meeting rooms were recommended. More extension courses were suggested as a way to bring farmers together. Better roads were needed to help the farmer get crops to market and also provide access to towns, to retail outlets and to community activities.

Rural free delivery of mail, telephones and better access to printed media where also high on the list.

Rural schools were found to be in poor condition and poorly supported compared to town and city schools. They lacked courses on good farming practices and cultural development.

Country life was seen as a moral foundation, and the most important source of moral development and guidance was the church. Churches were a fundamental institution in country life but there were few resident ministers and fewer who were knowledgeable about rural affairs or effective as leaders in community development.

Leadership, places to meet, training and resources were objectives that could be supplied by governments, both local and Federal. An appeal was made for men and women to live in the country, young people "of quality, energy, capacity, aspiration and conviction, who will live in the open country as permanent residents on farms, or as teachers, or in other useful fields, and who, while developing their own business or affairs to the greatest perfection, will still have unselfish interest in the welfare of their communities. It will be well for us as a people if we recognize the opportunity for usefulness in the open country and consider that there is a call for service." Their job would be to arouse people to a greater awareness of their social needs and potentials and, most importantly, to keep young people on the farm rather than going to the city.

Roosevelt championed the medium-scale farmers, the "dirt farmer." He said of the farmer-owner: "This type of life is passed in healthy surroundings which tends to develop the qualities of citizenship and allows a closer touch between people, to 'feel more vividly the underlying sense of brotherhood of community of interest.'" He added, "The man who tills his own farm, who grows what we eat and the raw material, more than any other element of the population stands for the traditional American ideals and provides an essential bulwark against dangerous social and political innovations. Farmers and the small merchant, clerks and mechanics who serve rural communities, retain, because of the surroundings and the nature of his work, a high degree the qualities which we like to think of as distinctly American." Roosevelt saw these qualities as the virtues of the "Embattled Farmers of '76." He sought to provide both a public philosophy and moderate Federal support for rural revitalization. He also sought private and volunteer support for the Commission's recommendations.

The 150-page report, first published in 1911, was reissued in 1917 and again in 1944. It is a compelling study of rural America and a thoughtful plan for development.

Rural community development was a Progressive ideal. It fostered democratic equality between town and farm. The movement also laid the groundwork for rural sustainability with goals such as healthy local environment, strong social relationships and viable local economies. These values have become increasingly important now, a century later. It has stimulated expansion of applied research into rural sociology, community development and agricultural economics.

I think it fair to say that Borsodi was probably a keen supporter of the Country Life ideal. His back-to-the-land program echoed its key values. However, he went further. His vision was to dismantle much of industry and the cities and to move people back to

self-sufficiency on the land. It was also more focused on local self-reliance than government intervention. To this extent, I think his approach was clearly more Populist than Progressive.

We will revisit the Country Life Movement.

The Great War

Where would this movement have gone if Roosevelt had served another term as President? When he ran for office in 1904, he said he would retire at the end of that term. In 1909 he left the Presidency to William Howard Taft and went on a fabled year-long safari to Africa. Returning home, he became disturbed with Taft's conservative leanings and decided to run for another term as President. Losing the Republican nomination to Taft he exercised his prerogatives as a leader of the Progressive movement and ran on the Progressive party ticket in 1913. The new party became the "Bull Moose" party after Roosevelt declared that he was "as strong as a bull moose." While there were Progressives in both parties, Roosevelt could not rally enough support to win although he did out-poll Taft. The split in the Republican ticket threw the election to Woodrow Wilson, the Democrat, with only 42% of the popular vote but with the electoral votes of 40 states.

Wilson inherited a healthy economy and two factions in Congress: The Agrarians, led by Bryan, and the pro-business wing. With a large Democratic majority, Wilson undertook trust busting, exempted labor and agriculture from anti-trust law, allowed collective bargaining; barred interstate shipment of goods manufactured with child labor; reduced the tariff rate, and legislated other banking and currency reform including creating the Federal Reserve system.

It should be made clear that Wilson took centralization of government to a new level. The Progressives had set the tone for government activism. The social sciences and social philosophies emerging at the time envisioned better, scientifically managed, societies. There were movements in social and educational reform. Even the Country Life Movement had called for increasing government intervention. This represented an important shift in the underlying philosophy of American government and would shape the political environment to this day. Borsodi was one of a small minority who fought this trend.

In 1914 war broke out in Europe. Wilson had run on a platform of neutrality and worked steadily to get the belligerents to the peace table with no success. Gradually the tide of neutrality shifted. Unrestricted submarine warfare, sinking merchant and passenger vessels indiscriminately, brought pressure to bear. Germany was using submarines to strangle the European Allies and nearly succeeded. Wilson resisted entering the war even after a German U-boat sank the Lusitania with the loss of 120 American lives. But the discovery of a plan by the Germans to make Mexico an ally, with a promise to help Mexico recover land in the American Southwest, mobilized anti-German sentiment leading to a US declaration of war against Germany in April 1917.

The global war economy had a profound impact on the structure of US society, the economy and on agriculture. World War I was a turning point for the US and the world. It marked the end of a chapter of history and the start of a series of events that would define the twentieth century.

Wilson clearly wanted a more collectivized country and the war gave him leverage. The government became increasingly centralized. It mobilized industry and expanded agricultural acreage. The economy was virtually nationalized during the war. Wilson set up a propaganda machine, and popular patriotic groups terrorized dissidents and those who showed a lack of enthusiasm.

The US became an awesome presence on the world stage. Some 4.7 million American men and women served the country during the war, with 2.8 million going overseas. The US Navy decimated the U-boats. Indeed, of the millions of troops shipped across the sea, none was lost to torpedoes. The influx of fresh troops and masses of new arms turned the tide of the war. There was a cost, of course; 116,516 Americans died in the war, more than half from non-combat conditions such as disease and accident, and 205,000 were wounded. In contrast, in one battle, at The Somme in 1916, the French lost 200,000, the British 400,000 and the Germans 500,000. It was a war of machine guns and lethal gases, of massive artillery barrages, tanks, aerial warfare and submarines.

On the balance, the war was good for the American economy: Over $3 billion in trade and $2 billion in credit to Europe. During World War I technological change accelerated and with it came new industries. There was a continued flight from the farm to the city.

Perhaps the most important impact of the war was psychological. The war was a human tragedy, a bloody horror. It was an industrial driven, mechanized, slaughter. In all more than 40 million died. It echoed the dark tones of Darwin and Freud, of Nietzsche and Marx. It was a shock to the humanitarian sentiment; some say a loss of hope in the human future. Borsodi didn't say much about it but he became, if not a pacifist, an advocate of peace. His primary concern, as noted, was the effect of massive centralization of government and business on the American character.

As horrible as the war, the Spanish flu pandemic that ravaged the world from 1918 through 1920, killed from 30 to 50 million to perhaps twice that number. In 1920 and 1921 the global economy went into recession, and prices soared in New York City.

The Borsodis decided to take flight from the city and seek greater security in the countryside.

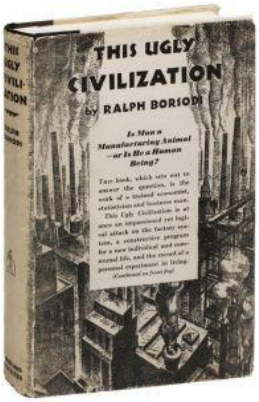
Chapter 2
This Ugly Civilization

An "ugly" civilization? So, what is wrong with modern society and how do we fix it? Many say "Yes, it's ugly but so what?" It provides us a lot of material comfort, and longer lives, so why change it? Ralph Borsodi thought it vitally important to answer this question.

Borsodi was by no means alone in finding fault with American "civilization." It wouldn't be hard to find a hundred books on the subject then and now. Borsodi was born into the era of industrial transformation that reshaped American society. He went from horse and buggy and candles to atomic energy and landings on the Moon. He experienced the clash of values between and old and a new order, between commercial and traditional agrarian society. These issues shaped the popular literature and political rhetoric of the time.

This Ugly Civilization was Borsodi's third book critical of American urban-industrial society. With it he shifted gears. He became more radical. He became more philosophical. He carefully defined a problem. And of greater importance, he stated a solution, two solutions in fact. The first was by example; that he went back to the land to achieve personal economic independence. He became a recognized champion of this model. Second, he clearly stated the reason why this change of lifestyle is necessary, and this is a philosophy of life, the philosophy of the independent, self-reliant, self-sufficient personality. He called it quality mindedness. He called for a revolution, a peaceful revolution through education and homesteading.

This Ugly Civilization was first published in 1929, on the eve of the Great Depression, and has been re-issued several times, the latest on the ninetieth anniversary by Keven Slaughter. It can be found at this link[4].



This ugly Civilization is a big book; 462 pages long. It is actually two books in one. The first book is Borsodi's critique of centralized industrial production, distribution and finance. He indicted commercial enterprise as dehumanizing.

The second part is about the pursuit of a better life. This has both a material aspect (personal economic independence) and a philosophic aspect. With the former Borsodi described his model homestead and its benefits. In the later matter, he began his discussion of the manner of education needed to achieve a quality state of mind.

With these topics Borsodi defined the scope of the work that would occupy him the remainder of his life – as we will see – 48 very productive years.

[4] *This Ugly Civilization*, 2019 edition https://www.amazon.com/MOUTEN-Sleeve-Casual-Business-Pockets/dp/1943687226.

"Relevance" is my philosopher's stone. We are going on a century since *This Ugly Civilization* was published, a truly incredible century. Borsodi would be the great, great, grandfather of millennials. For them his lifetime is found in history books. What I will argue is that while the outer form of our lives may have changed as a result of technology, the problems of the inner life have not. Indeed, a vast literature begin to appear at the end of Borsodi's life dealing with the issues of living adequately in a rapidly changing world.

I had the privilege of writing a new introduction for the 2019 edition of *This Ugly Civilization*. In that introduction I described a way forward. In short, I found it, and the bulk of Borsodi's work, highly relevant to this twenty-first century. This book was the foundation of Borsodi's mission, and he built on it. It is becoming increasingly urgent that we update the blueprint for his work.

Part I: This Ugly Civilization

Borsodi opened this section with two quotes from Nietzsche: "Man hath enjoyed himself too little," and the second, in essence, that this shames us. He started Chapter I with this rather poetic statement:

> *"This is an ugly civilization.*
>
> *"It is a civilization of noise, smoke, smells, and crowds – of people content to live amidst the throbbing of its machines; the smoke and smells of its factories; the crowds and discomforts of the cities of which it proudly boasts.*

Borsodi listed some examples of ugly cites such as Pittsburgh with its clouds of soot, Chicago with the smell of the slaughterhouses, New York City with its crowds, crowds and more crowds. And there are many, many more such cities. In short, these proud products of industry, while giving us material comforts, rob of us of the pleasures of living.

He goes on to describe the psychology of industrial work:

> *"The servitude of the factory which it enforces uniformly upon all men harnesses skilled workers and creative individuals in a repetitive treadmill which makes each muscle of their bodies, every drop of blood in their views, the very fibres of their being, cry out in voiceless agony that they are being made to murder time – the irreplaceable stuff of which life itself is composed.*
>
> *"For America is a respecter of things only, and time – why time is only something to be killed or butchered into things which can be bought and sold.*

The institutions that dominate this society are led by "acquisitive, predatory, ruthless, quantity-minded men." They have the power to impose their will.

Borsodi closed the first chapter with a QED (what was to be shown) to his opening statement:

> *"For this is an ugly civilization.*
>
> *"It is ugly because of its persistent failure to concern itself about whether the work men do, and the things they produce, and above all the way they live, create the comfort and understanding essential if mankind is to achieve an adequate destiny.*
>
> *"And it will remain ugly and probably become uglier year by year until the men who are able to mitigate its ugliness free themselves to do so."*

In Chapter II Borsodi discussed the role of the machine in industrial life. He started by saying that we have a poor understanding of the nature of a machine. He believed that machines can be used "to free its finest sprits for the pursuit of beauty." Or not. He cited Gandhi's plea for simple machines used in a village economy, for example, the spinning wheel. Gandhi strenuously opposed industrialization of India[5].

Borsodi made a clear distinction between the factory machine and the domestic machine. Electric motors and internal combustion engines make domestic machines productive and reduce drudgery. He provided a long list of useful machines and how they did the work of factories.

Borsodi made it clear that it is the factory, not the machine, that is the problem:

> *"If mankind is not to be made into appendages to machines, then domestic machines must be invented capable of enabling the home to meet the competition of the factory – the right kind of machinery must be used to free man from the tyranny of the wrong kind of machinery.*

He pointed out that the object of machinery is not to produce as much as possible but producing rather that which is compatible with the good life. Otherwise, we waste time and material that should be employed to make the world a more beautiful place to live.

The third chapter addresses how the idea of efficiency is used to drive industrial development, and why this is a bad idea. The factory, Borsodi pointed out, is not a product of nature, it is a human artifice. We need to understand the thinking that went into creating the factory system. [Coming soon a link to *The American Economy*.] And we need to ask is it possible to live well without it?

Borsodi described something of the history of industrialization. It came about with the invention of more complex and efficient machines that were driven by waterpower. This happened with textiles in England. Production went from homes to factories. Adam Smith in his 1776 *The Wealth of Nations* described a division of labor for making pens – a lot of people each doing one operation in turn. It produced a lot of pins. But it turned people into cogs in the factory system. The book came out at the time Watt perfected the steam engine to power the industrial revolution. This turned laborers into machine tenders.

Efficient machines produced great wealth and wealth harvesting became the objective of business. As laws and procedures to support industrialization were established, factories became bigger, businesses became gigantic, monopolies were formed. More and more factories were built, and this resulted in greater and greater competition. With increased competition the struggle for businesses to survive became more intense. New tools and procedures were invented, such as Taylor's scientific management, to milk the last drop of efficiency out of human labor.

Borsodi, as an expert on the subject, discussed the cost of doing business by the factory system – a crucial point in his argument about returning to domestic production. The cost of factory production includes labor, material and production. As factories located close to raw materials, they were served by a network of railroads and canals, rivers and

[5] Borsodi had much more to say about this in his *The Challenge of Asia* some 30 years later.

oceangoing vessels. Distribution became an additional cost of business that was passed on to the consumer.

Three levels of profit taking came about as a result of this system: factory, wholesale (distribution) and retail (marketing and advertising). Less than one-third of the cost the consumer pays is the cost of factory production. There were also unstated costs, those needed to run governments and other institutions, that were paid indirectly by the consumer through taxes and fees. This includes regulation and compliance. Many directly affect the health, safety and welfare of people. We now understand environmental impact as one of the major indirect cost of business today.

Governments did respond to the conditions imposed on workers. They created more regulations and programs. But they depend on tax revenues to do their work and so we get the income tax. They produced massive bureaucracies. They sought to break monopolies. Borsodi wrote an interesting story about a consortium of businessmen, attorneys and government officials who devised a system that circumvented the Sherman anti-trust act. In short, while keeping industries, like oil, somewhat fragmented, regulations legitimized collaboration and consolidation.

Borsodi also discussed the communist system in Russia and trends towards socialization in developed countries. He criticized communist and socialist theories as, first, destructive of human freedom and initiative, and second, of increasing cost of doing business. He observed that, as found in both big businesses and governments, there was an increasing centralization and hardening of corporate management. With this increasing rigidity of management, the communist, socialist and corporate organizations become indistinguishable. There is, in fact, little difference in the structure and operation of a massive multi-national corporation (today) and centralized political control in communist countries. What is lost is the individual and personal freedom that informed Borsodi's core value.

Over the course of this last century, we have seen the process of industrialization continue and accelerate. To reduce labor cost, we have moved manufacturing offshore. We have also automated manufacturing. There is today a vast, elaborate and complex global economic system. Raw materials and resources are becoming increasingly scarce. Population continues to rise exponentially. New economies are striving to emerge into the global market. This complexity is unmanageable. This type of economy is not sustainable, and it is inherently unstable.

Given these facts, do we need to ask if this is an ugly civilization? Do we dare dismiss thinking about solutions and alternatives? And do we have the courage to seek an alternative, as proposed by Borsodi?

Part II: The Factory

Borsodi devoted 150 pages to "The Factory." This section includes five chapters. The first is introductory. The remaining four each take up a problem with the factory economy. In this section he also introduced his alterative to the factory system and made his case for home production.

Borsodi opened the first chapter with a restatement of the ugly factory system. The buildings are ugly. It creates traffic and congestion. It raises land cost. Low wage workers breed slums. It requires intrusive transportation right of ways – look at our modern freeway system. It greatly increased the complexity of society. It introduced high-pressure marketing, credit buying, a dominant distribution system, drives consumer consumption and produces massive waste.

He then described the alterative, pre-industrial economy that once defined us before, as he said, Samuel Slater brought the factory system to the US in 1790. Before that nearly everything consumed in the American home was either produced at home or made to order in community mills and custom workshops. Farmers worked in crafts and trades off-season in home shops. These handmade products were labor and time consuming but durable. Nearly every home had a spinning wheel and small loom. They produced their own food. Eric Sloan produced a number of well written and well-illustrated book about pre-industrial trades and tools in America.

It should be noted that an inventory of things found in a comfortable home in the nineteenth century was a fraction of what we have today (much of which is located in storage bins and lockers). The factories begin producing a great variety of products in quantity at low cost – just browse through a reprint of a massive early 20th century Sears catalog to see what was offered. But, the quality of these goods, said Borsodi, was lower than those produced locally.

Borsodi Brought this chapter to a close with a list of four aspects of the factory's influence which are the topics of the remaining four chapters of this part:

1. Quality of products
2. Influence on those who do the work
3. Influence on the public/consumer
4. Influence on the quality minded minority.

Borsodi acknowledged that there are many advantages to the factory, with this admonishment:

> *The factory promises us in the future even more riches than we enjoy today. It seems to offer us veritable golden age.*
>
> *We shall see, however, that all is not gold that glitters.*

That line, I would like to add, came from Shakespeare and I'm surprised Borsodi didn't quote the entire passage:

> *All that glitters is not gold;*
>
> *Often have you heard that told:*
>
> *Many a man his life hath sold*
>
> *But my outside to behold:*
>
> *Gilded tombs do worms enfold.*
>
> *Had you been as wise as bold,*
>
> *Young in limbs, in judgment old,*
>
> *Your answer had not been inscroll'd:*

Fare you well; your suit is cold.

J. R. R. Tolkien also picked up this notion in one of him most often quoted lines:

"All that is gold does not glitter,

Not all those who wander are lost;

The old that is strong does not wither

Deep roots are not reached by the frost.

I believe Tolkien would have been very much in sympathy with Borsodi in *This Ugly Civilization*. Tolkien's epic *Lord of the Rings* is a thinly veiled critique of industrial civilization. He saw it as a great evil.

The Hobbits exemplify the homesteader's life. I tried to capture a vision of a good non-industrial society inspired by Borsodi and Tolkien in my *A Visit to the Hobbit Shire* (Kindle)[6].

Other speculative writers have picked up on the evils of industrial society such as H. G. Wells in *The Time Machine* and other novels, and Clifford D. Simak in *City* and other of his pastoral science fiction novels and stories. The Southern Agrarian book *I'll Take My Stand* is an even more powerful critique of the impact of industry on American society which came out the year after *This Ugly Civilization*. I cover more of this in my chapter on decentralism.

The Factory's Products

This chapter opens with the challenging question: *"To what extent are the factory's products necessary to the maintenance of our present standards of living?"*

There are, to start with, three kinds of factory products:

1. Those that justify a factory. Products that are essential to maintaining current standards of material well-being and more readily produced in a factory setting. They include steel, wire, pipe, electric motors and other machines. The factory can produce an automobile or farm tractor at lower cost than a home workshop or village mill.
2. Products that can be made just as well at home
3. Products that we could easily do without.

Regarding the first, essential, type of factory, Borsodi wrote:

> *"Their revolution has been justified on the ground that it improved the conditions of mankind and added to the wealth of the nations of the world.*

However:

> *"That is precisely the ground on which I shall justify the industrial counter-revolution – for I propose to show that the elimination of the non-essential and undesirable factory will add to the real comfort and true wealth of mankind.*

At this point, about a fifth of the way into the book, Borsodi began to propose a good business case to eliminate non-essential factories. He considered about 40% of American factories non-essential.

[6] Sharp, A Visit to the Hobbit Shire: https://www.amazon.in/Visit-Hobbit-Shire-William-Sharp-ebook/dp/B00H912XUS.

He started with flour and baked goods. Home baking is a lost art and that is a product of advertising. Flour can easily be milled and baked into a variety of healthy and tasty products in the home. He gave examples of home mills and foods. He added an electric motor to his family's mill. I should note that I do much of our baking and find it easy and enjoyable to do. I get to choose the quality of my ingredients and it takes a really good professional baker to make a tastier product.

He then wrote about canned goods and made a case for home canning. Home production can also include milk, butter, cheese, eggs and meats. The factories case for canned goods was that home canning was a drudgery. Modern innovations such as home stoves (presumably gas and electric), pressure cookers and the mason jar, wrote Borsodi, have made this a much more practical and attractive home craft. Modern appliances are in fact a major feature in Borsodi's argument. He and his wife were pioneers in develop domestic arts that saved time and money, created home employment, and provider healthier foods.

Borsodi, the economist and accounting, kept careful cost accounts of their home production. He made the case that the time required was less than needed to earn the money to buy inferior products.

Borsodi estimated the impact of home production on the factory system. If everyone produced their own bread and canned goods, we would eliminate 5,232 mills, 18,739 large and many smaller bakeries and 2,177 packers and canners in the US. It would also have eliminated some 350,000 factory jobs. And it was just the start. Ten percent of the US workforce, he said, worked in non-essential industry. Borsodi thought other employment could be found but indeed, with the Great Depression, by 1932 13,000,000 had lost their jobs and the remainder were working at reduced wages. His alternative would have provided security for those displaced from the factory under his system; and in another chapter we will see how this developed.

Borsodi continued with the meat industry. American's eat a lot of meat (second then only to Australia) because there is a lot of land to raise cattle on and its cheap. We don't need so much meat in our diet. He also noted the infamous stench of cattle yards and slaughterhouses on the outskirts of many cities. Studies had been made about the unhealthy conditions of slaughterhouses. There was at least one popular novel about them.

Sweeteners and starch were becoming popular. Corn syrup was being produced in large quantities and could be turned into products that would imitate honey and maple syrup. They were as much about chemistry as nutrition – poor substitutes for natural foods. Many of these manufactured substitutes were considered potentially harmful to human health.

He then turned to the spinning and clothing industries. American industry was founded on textiles. The plantation South raised cotton for the mills and increased slave labor to meet factory demands. Home spinning and weaving was an ancient tradition. He wrote "The music of the spinning wheel and the rhythm of the loom filled the land." Home weaving produced a wider variety of fabrics and the quality was high. Home produced clothing had he quality of beauty.

Borsodi cited Gandhi's work to retain the village textile industry. The British had crushed it. They produced cloth in English factories from Indian cotton and sold it back to India at a high cost.

The American textile industry, Borsodi reported, had 7816 factories employing 1,164,638 wage earners. There were also 16,904 wearing apparel manufactures with 499,413 wage earners. All of these factories worked to narrow standards. Production machinery allowed little variation. The quality, again, was questionable. Styles changed annually so why make things to last?

In summary, there are a lot of factories, ugly places, making a lot of things we don't need. Eliminating factories would also eliminate a host of social, economic and political problems that go with the system. Restoring home production has been made easier with electricity – while maintaining quality. Electric household appliances were being widely sold and rural electrification was being pushed. It takes little to modify old tools for higher, easier production. Return to home production would, in addition, remove "the crippling effect upon the mind of this ignorance about the production of goods we consume – we are cheated of a normal education."

I should point out that this model suggests a homemaker, a form of employment that has become increasingly unpopular and, due largely to two income family, impractical. Borsodi was strong on traditional family. He was also adamant that both husband and wife (and children at an appropriate age) be employed in domestic production. That does not mean no day job, but that could be part time or employment in a personal craft or trade.

The Factory Worker

The factory system radically changed the structure of American society. It herded people into the cities and made them wage earners and consumers. It changed the economic foundation of the family. It changed the status of women as the center of her life moved outside the home. Two income families were already becoming the norm. It changed the concept of the home: no longer the place where you take root, no longer a place to really live. In the city, indeed, often no longer even owned.

Reforms were being made for wage earners and Borsodi acknowledge four of them: Shorter work hours, raised wages, lowered prices of commodities, and improved worker's social and political status. Borsodi was more concerned with what the factor system was doing <u>to</u> the wage earner. He listed eight issues:

1. It mechanized workers and turned them into cogs in the industrial machine.
2. By introducing more efficient machines and processes, it reduced the number of workers required to produce them and made low-paying menials of the rest.
3. It brought workers and employers into conflict.
4. It makes it almost impossible for a worker to be self-sufficient.
5. It destroys skilled craftsmanship - a means of self-expression as well as livelihood.
6. It leaves workers without initiative and self-reliance.
7. It transfers the economic satisfaction of the home economy to the factory, depriving the family of intimacy with growing things and of self-reliance.

8. It turns the arts and crafts into repetitive work.

Or, as Adam Smith stated it, it creates "a manufacturing animal."

Farming was a balanced occupation. It was part-time. Farmers spent other time in trades and crafts. The artisans and tradespeople who had shops in the village usually owned from one to 20 acres near the town. They too worked part time and grew much of their own food. There was give and take between work and play. There were numerous holidays and celebrations and fairs. In contrast, the factory worker has a steady, year-round, routine timed by the clock.

The factory requires a labor pool – a surplus of labor with a pool of unemployed. Workers become desperate to remain employed. Most jobs required little skill. Henry Ford wrote that 43% of jobs can be learned in a day and 36% require up to a week. Another six percent can be trained within two weeks. This is 85% of the workforce. Only one percent were skilled workers who required one to six years to learn their jobs. Ford also observed that just over half of jobs did not require full physical capacity. He found employment for cripples and amputees – many the product of industrial accidents. In short labor was cheap to develop and plentiful. There is no human quality to such conditions.

Scientific management also gained popularity. It sought to get the utmost of both time and strength from laborers and machine tenders. Workers were mere statistics who motions were measured and timed with a stopwatch. Borsodi called them joyless automatons. He wrote: "They were chained to their machines as effectively as galley slaves were chained to their oars."

The Factory's Customers

Borsodi doubted that Adam Smith, when he called man "a manufacturing animal," foresaw department stores, self-service grocery stores and massive advertisement that turned us also into buying (shopping) animals. He quoted Oscar Wilde: "Nowadays people know the price of everything and the value of nothing."

Did Smith clearly foresee that manufacturers would be forced to create buyers to consume their products. We paid a high cost when the factory destroyed self-sufficiency and turned us into earning and spending animals. The factory system has deprived us of much of the means to satisfy the intellectual, economic and social aspiration that were part of home life. Consuming finished goods deprive us of a sense of where our food, clothing and other commodities come from.

In Borsodi's view, this particularly affected women[7]. Women have become buyers rather than producers. They too have become earners to meet the added expenses of running a household. Homemaking, he said, is self-expression, a skill, a discipline. It is an art, a lost art. The studio is the kitchen, nursery, sewing room, dining room, living room perhaps a garden. It is about creating beauty – a desirable place to be and the center of the good life.

Borsodi wrote approvingly of the advances in the rights of women, including the vote and higher education. Some had become successful careerist but for most, work

[7] Borsodi's traditional view of the role of woman as homemaker has earned him the ire of feminist. But he also established the economic value of homemaking.

outside of the home is just a job – driven by necessity. A few choose a life outside the home. Others are simple forced out of homemaking. The home, however, is important as it holds the family together. It is the source of our sense of values. And we are losing it.

The Conquering Factor System

The economy of a pre-industrial village or small town could produce most of what was needed. A blacksmith could make virtually anything from a piece of iron, a carpenter from wood. Products were durable. Artisans were appropriate compensated for they time and materials. Much of that was barter.

The factory system is about efficiency. It systemizes production, standardizes to produce uniformity and relies of an elaborate division of labor.

Borsodi observed that "Life, if man is to dignify it by the way he lives, must be lived artistically. Not quantitative but qualitative criterions apply in home life, in education, in social activities, in literature, painting, sculpture.

He continued: "Yet the apostles of efficiency have not been content to limit its application to the factory. They have made efficiency a philosophy of life and are now busily engaged in apply the factory system to the regulation of every activity of civilized man." Borsodi quoted scientific management prophet Frederick Taylor: "In the past the man has been first; in the future the system must be first." The factory system works to turn all of society into a machine. The factory works not to fulfill our needs but to multiple them. This idea had a foundation in the mechanistic assumptions of science itself that considered animals, including human beings, are merely a form of machine.

Borsodi wrote about the division of labor – the reduction of a job into a series of single task with a worker assigned to do each. The magneto of a Ford car requires 29 men to assemble, the motor 84. Such workers are mere cogs in the greater machine. There are no individuals.

The factory system pervades all aspects of life. Borsodi also wrote about its impact on entertainment. Where once the family gathered to make music, to read together, to converse, they now consume commercial entertainment. Where once they played ball, masses turn out for sporting events. Today we have a wide variety of youth sports but mostly highly organized rather than spontaneous.

Schools have also become part of the factory system. Schools of that time were built to resemble factories. Curriculums were standardized, taught by specialist teachers, and carefully graded. From nursery to university, students went to school en masse, played en masse, thought en masse.

Everything is represented by numbers, sequence, time and place. This is the dominant quantity mind. Borsodi anticipated Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* by three years. They soon became friends.

The problem has been stated. Next, Borsodi offered his solution and laid the foundation of his educational system by which he hoped to reverse the trend of the urban-industrial factory system.

Part III: The Person in the Drama

In this part of the book, Borsodi starts to cut to the chase. The factory is a product of history, of the people who define it. He defined three social types. (Few are likely pure types.) The great majority are the average members of society. Perhaps too harsh a term or perhaps illustrative, he calls them the "herd mentality." They go where they are led. There is a smaller minority of quantity-minded who are defined as acquisitive, predatory, dominating. They have the power and define history. They give us the ugly civilization. There is a smaller minority of the quality minded who give us that which is beautiful in civilization.

Borsodi refuted the idea of equality. Nature likes variety. There are the strong and the weak, the smart and the stupid, old and young, rich and poor, sweet tempered and testy.

He likens us to a race through time – generation after generation, from the distant past into the future. The old die and more of us are born. Each of us is born into it and finds a place.

What we might call Borsodi's rule is his statement: "Every individual is a law unto himself because each individual is the product of a sequence of events which are not exactly duplicated in the life of any other." Throughout his life he returned to this principle.

The progress of the human race depends on which style is dominate: Quantity or Quality minded, brute strength or intelligence. The predatory bosses us. The cultured try to civilize us. If we want the latter, we need institutions that encourage intelligence. This is Thomas Jefferson's theory. He advocated educational institutions that would produce a natural aristocracy, not a ruling elite but men and women of intelligence. These are the teachers of humankind. These are the quality minded.

Is this a utopian vision? No, but it is an ideal and Borsodi wasn't sure it is even possible. At least not for society as a whole but perhaps in enclaves, in islands of intelligence and sanity.

Our future will be defined by three forces. First is the changes in the natural order itself. We have no control over this (that's changed). Second is the efforts of ambitious men and woman motivated by power. The third is launched by a new idea. If we hope to see real progress, the quality minded must free themselves from the dominance of the quantity mind. This is another of Borsodi's basic rules.

John Doe, Average Man: The Heard-Minded Type

The conditions that define who we are have changed considerably since 1929. Then, maybe ten percent of those who entered school graduate and maybe 10 out of a thousand finished college.

Then more people went to church, more to Bible School. Today we have a great variety of Christian denominations and a greater variety of other religions. Do these scriptures give us what we need to define the quality life? Borsodi steps across the line for many with his critique of the validity of the ethical principles of the Bible.

John Doe doesn't read books. Didn't then and doesn't now. Today the "average" person reads four books in a year, all lightweight. Most college graduates never read

another book. Then, John and Jane read the newspaper and many of them tabloids. They read weekly magazines. They went to the movies. Radio had then only recently appeared. This is the foundation of a popular culture.

John and Jane follow convention. They follow the leader. They don't think for themselves. They take what they get. They envy the millionaire but not the thinker.

John D. Rockefeller

Borsodi considered John D. Rockefeller the archetype quantity minded businessman. Indeed, he considered him "monstrous." Rockefeller was the iconic success story. He came from humble beginning. He was driven by money; he was ruthless and had an indominable will. At death he was worth today's equivalent of over $400 billion. Most billionaires today are worth a small fraction of that – the richest in 2020 less than half that.

As did many industrial barons, Rockefeller went into philanthropy. Borsodi is dismissive of such gifts. He asserted that Pestalozzi and Froebel did more for education, Pasteur and Lister for medicine and Cardinal Newman and Theodore Parker for religion than did Rockefeller. Big money brings with it the rules of the quantity mind.

The "Rockefellers," including leaders in religion, government and armed forces, make history. Yet there can be sparks of light like Zoroaster, Buddha, Jesus, Confucius, Spinoza and Socrates. Yet even these great systems are in time corrupted to the service of power and acquisition. It is a constant struggle for quality minded men and women.

Charles W. Eliot

Eliot (1834 – 1926) was Borsodi's archetype of the quality minded leader. Eliot was President of Harvard from 1869 – 1909. He spent his career humanizing college and university education; or what the quality-drive person should take from his or her education: Borsodi sought to identify and describe the quality minds of his age and offered this outline, from the works of Eliot:

An available body. Not necessarily the muscle of an athlete. Good circulation, digestion, power to sleep, and alert, steady nerves.

Power of sustained mental labor.

The habit of independent thinking on books, prevailing customs, current events.

The habit of quiet, unobtrusive, self-regulated conduct, not accepted from others or influenced by the vulgar breath.

Reticent, reserved, a few intimate friends. Belonging to no societies perhaps. Carrying in his face the character so plainly to be seen there by the most casual observer, that nobody ever makes to him a dishonorable proposal.

In short, the young person entering the world should be healthy, diligent, independent in thinking, reserved, honest and self-sufficient. Eliot reflected Emerson's (A Harvard graduate a century earlier) ideals so well expressed in the essay "Self-Reliance." Emerson and his friend Thoreau (also a Harvard graduate), I would note, were among the first to understand the unfavorable nature of the then emerging industrial age.

Eliot's is a concise statement of the values to which men of superior qualities attach importance. It is an interesting revelation of what Eliot himself considered the "durable satisfactions of life."

The quality minded individual is not driven by acquisition, wealth and power, rather they "Extract beauty, truth and goodness from the common stuff of life, no matter what his/her vocation, much as a miner extracts gold from crude ore, and thus enable [themselves] and those about [them] to understand more and to see more, to feel more, and know more than they would otherwise apprehend." They put more value on ideas, "ethical ideas, intellectual ideas, esthetic ideas." These are intangible things. The quality minded are not impractical and dreamy but rather down to earth. They are skillful. They think critically, check the facts. There ideals are about permanent things. Ideas endure the centuries; everyday affairs are soon forgotten, like last week's newspaper.

The factory system constrains the freedom of the quality minded. To earn a living, they have to fit in somewhere. Borsodi gives us another of his axioms: "Until the [person] who is interested in ideas and who produces new ideas is really free to do so – free economically, social, and political – neither he [/she], nor the world at large will really be able to live in mental and physical comfort." The quality person has a gift, but the acceptance of this bounty is always slow to ripen. This is another way of saying they are ahead of their time.

In many ages, such as the European Dark Age, personal independence was suppressed entirely. Such people are the "leavening in the lump of mankind." They produce ideas, create beauty, promote understanding." They got a new chance with the Renaissance. Borsodi added: "I believe that the factory menaces the very existence of the leaven in the lump of mankind." This promises another dark age.

Those who do not choose this fate must free themselves. "'Men of superior minds,' says Confucius, 'busy themselves first in getting at the root of things, and when they have succeeded in this, the right course is open to them.'"

Borsodi closed Book I of *This Ugly Civilization*, which may be thought of as his indictment, with these lines:

"The individual quality-minded [person] may not be able to prevent society from plunging into the indignity of a mechanized dark age.

"Be he/she may be able to live [themselves].

And with that we go to Borsodi's proposed program for doing that.

The Conquest of Comfort

Borsodi described two ideas about "comfort:"

- "The Material Aspect" addresses the problem of meeting our basic needs, to achieve a degree of comfort. Borsodi described his nearly decade-long experiment in homesteading.
- "The Philosophical Aspect" addresses the barriers to achieving comfort and how to overcome them. This is the beginning of his educational program.

"Comfort "is a condition of freedom from involuntary, unjust, or imposed pain, cold, hunger and other distresses of the body. Comfort is a state of moderate, temperate, and stable physical well-being."

Comfort is also a state of mind: "a condition of mental as well as material well-being." We need to learn not to buy products that do not make our lives better. As long as we are dependent upon what the factory provides, we live in a state of dependence. We call it anxiety in modern terms. Comfort requires we break the chains of dependency.

A family homestead is the foundation of achieving a good life. It should be in a rural setting, a farm, but small. The farmer could lead the way to breaking the institutional dependencies of the factory system. They already have the capacity to achieve independence.

Borsodi would have liked to create a revolution, a massive revolt against the factory system. It would be highly disruptive of the current economy and political system. If enough people sought homesteading independence, factories would close, even railroads would be affected by shrinkage of freight. Food could be produced for the city from the local region and neighborhood markets revived. The farmer would get just compensation.

He observed that there was plenty of arable land in New York state to provide every family a homestead. It would take capital (a problem Borsodi solved just a few years later). Homesteaders would have ample time to pursue trades and professions of their own choosing to round out the family budget. They could build fine houses. They could learn to work in "stone-cutting, masonry, bricklaying, carpentry, joining, iron-work and all the other crafts essential in building of beautiful and substantial homes." As did he.

Borsodi also made a case for electrification. At the time only about one-third of Americans were living where electricity was available and had home appliances; for the most part vacuum cleaners and washing machines. He was a pioneer in electrifying small machines like grain mills to make homesteading work easier. He provided a long list of farm applications that could benefit from a little bit of technology[8] .

The Essentials: Food, Clothing and Shelter

We accept what we get because we do not ask if a better method is possible. Can we do better than the factory system? Borsodi said so in the strongest terms. We can produce our own needs without excessive and unpleasant labor, in less time than needed to earn the money to buy them. It is in fact pleasant work.

Borsodi was an accountant. He did the numbers. He listed the basic needs and the equivalent labor require to buy them. He listed basic foods and the percentage each represents to food expenditures. He made his case for home production of food by cost comparison. He was drawing on nearly a decade of personal experiences. Bottom line, we reduce 56 days needed to earn the money for food to33 days gardening and canning – a gain of 23 days per year.

He estimated it took 44.7 days to provide for shelter including water, lighting and fuel. An equivalent amount of time would furnish us with a fine home in the county.

[8] Borsodi anticipated E. F. Schumacher, who got the credit for this appropriate technology in his *Small is Beautiful*, by *44 years.*

Clothing: We would gain 24 days per year making our own.

Borsodi tabulated the time savings in a variety of categories. Overall, homesteaders could gain 96 days per year by producing their own needs. The extra time would be used productively, creatively, healthfully.

The Homestead

The homestead, first of all, gives us intimate contact with the land, with life, with growing things, sun and rain, fresh air, green grass and trees. As long as we have access to land, we remain free to labor as we wish and free to live as we please. Yet 13 million, of 25 million American families, were landless. Borsodi noted that two million people on Manhattan Island paid rent to 40,000 landlords for a place to sleep. Much of our land is held by speculators.

As land became scarcer during the nineteenth century, people moved to the cities. Some were ambitious, others just looking for work. Borsodi acknowledged that the city is attractive, mostly because of crowds. Millions of people crowd into a few square miles. Streets and stores and theaters are crowded. Borsodi, who grew up in New York City, apparently didn't care for the crowds.

But he admitted that once established, it's hard to get people to leave. Nonetheless he saw the city as a physically and psychologically unhealthy place. You have to accept "the ugliness, the discomforts, and the servitude of industrialism." He added: "City dwellers become anesthetized against the noise, the smoke and smell, the crowds and the strains of the city." He proposed a major revolution, a mass exit from the city.

So, who is he talking to? Who are the candidates for his homesteading adventure? This brings us back to that little band of outliers, the quality minded people. Are they the type of people who would be attracted by an independent life on a few acres of land, free of dependences, raising excellent food, plenty of exercise? One example Borsodi gave for return to the land is the garden theme. He makes it attractive as an art form, which, of course, it is. This is an organic homestead, a place where "we are economically creative and not merely economically consumptive."

Another of Borsodi's axioms, is that the homestead and the home are a family affair: "The natural family seems to me the normal nucleus around which to build such a home." Such a home provides a place where children are absorbed in nature and practical arts. He has little good to say about the conditions children experience in modern schools. They need a natural and liberal education.

He suggested the organization of what we now call intentional communities, groups of people who come together around common values. He offered a constitution for its formation. His preamble reads:

> *"We, the members of this homestead, in order to form a more perfect home, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common interest, promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our prosperity, do ordain and establish this constitution.*

This is, of course, a paraphrase of the Preamble to the Constitution of the United States of America. It takes us to Borsodi's core values, values found in The Declaration of

Independence and Thomas Jefferson. Borsodi wrote: "For quality-minded men and women, the economic independence which such a homestead would furnish would be of revolutionary consequence."

This revolution is embodied in a key principle, and I think a telling one. This is Borsodi's Declaration of Independence:

> *If the majority of our artists, writers, architects, engineers, teachers, musicians, scientists were in this way to secure the freedom to refuse to do work which outrages their tastes, life for everybody would undergo a radical change. The mere fact that businessmen would lose their power to dictate to the idealists of the world; that they would have to solicit the services of idealist rather than the idealist should beg them to utilize their services, would be sufficient to change a society in which emphasis is placed upon money into a society in which emphasis would be placed upon ideals.*

Under these conditions, the plutocracy would fail, and a new leadership emerge.

Relative to this, Borsodi quoted Confucius:

> *"To learn, and then to practice opportunely what one has learnt – does not this bring with it a sense of satisfaction?*
>
> *"To have associates in study coming to one from distant parts – does not this also mean pleasure in store?*
>
> *"Are not those who, while not comprehending all that is said, still remain not unpleased to hear mean of superior order?*

Time

Borsodi found no greater untruth than the biblical curse "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." From this tradition we have the attitude, he believed, that happiness is to be free of work. That attitude, he suggested, came out of enslavement. Is there any wonder that it is the attitude of the factory worker enslaved to routine drudgery?

Borsodi proposed a Law of Comfort: "Man must use all the faculties of mind and muscle with which [s]he is endowed. We don't want to abolish labor; we want to ennoble and dignify it. Obeying this law gives us physical and mental strength."

There are horror stories of the hardship of pioneering farmers and indeed many struggled. But compare this to the stories of squalor in the cities. Pioneering was tough work. After the land was settled, things often got a lot better. The landscape where I live is dotted with old stone houses that market prosperous farms, with families of many children – all well housed, well-fed and well-clad; from early years all working for the good of the family. There was a sense of community. The land is dotted with villages, with churches, schools and mills. This is also a home of the Amish who continue to prosper on the land with horse-drawn plows.

There are a variety of ways drudgery can be relieved on the family homestead. They start with collaborative work as a group – everyone pitching in. Children take natural joy in creative and productive work. The old and infirmed can work creatively and contribute. Borsodi, as noted, was a pioneer in the mechanization of home and farm appliances. He brought in electricity, bought an electric range. Put in a pump and hot water heater. The bought a small tractor. There is also a lot of work that can just be eliminated such as using mulch in the garden to suppress weeds.

Borsodi considered time a precious commodity. What is the advantage of spending time rather than money? Time is not money, as the popular line goes. Time is life itself. "The true economy is not money but time, just as true waste is not money but of the irreplaceable materials of nature."

As stated, the homestead earns the basic needs in the equivalent of eight months, leaving a third of the calendar open for other creative employment – not merely for leisure but work and learning and engagement with living. Borsodi noted that during the Middle Ages, one-third of the calendar was devoted to holidays and festivals. He also wrote:

> *"A beautiful civilization needs more men and women to whom the work of their crafts and their professions is the expression of their own inner aspirations.*
>
> *"The world needs amateur writers, painters, sculptors, dramatists, teachers and scientist. It needs men and women who can appreciate the great achievements of the arts and sciences because they are themselves engaged in contributing to them. Many of the greatest achievements of the human race in the arts and sciences have been the work of amateurs – men and women who worked in many fields and brought to bear upon each of them that fresh point of view which the specialist and the technicians do not supply.*
>
> *Such as "A Benjamin Franklin who is a printer, a writer, a scientist and a statements; a Thomas Jefferson who is a farmer, a philosopher, a teacher, a statesman, a lawyer and a writer; a George Washington who is a military strategist, a stateman, s surveyor and a farmer: these are worth more to the world than dozens of one-track-minded specialists and technicians.*

A few good one-liners:

Schooling is also part of the home economy, not the factory economy. Play is a major part of family life and learning. Play is not paid entertainment.

We are forced to buy education. Many subjects have been turned into "professions." We want technical experts and specialist to solve our problems.

The home is a place for hospitality.

We simply cannot achieve a quality life until we free ourselves from earning money.

"Time spent in labor we do not enjoy is a crime."

And, no amount of wealth will buy us more time.

Machinery

With prevailing wages and prices, how does a family get started in homesteading? How do they acquire land and equipment? Borsodi provided an accountant's advice: You can start with installment credit. But, he cautioned, credit buying is for investment, not expenditure – food processing equipment rather than groceries. It is for productive, not non-productive use. Borsodi's advice is a lot unlike that he might give a small business just getting started.

Commercialism, he continued, along with installment credit, is something that has been "shoved down our throats." He advocated a factory model (which could be small-scaled and local) for making domestic (home and garden) machinery, a model that

would gradually erode the factory system and its liabilities[9]. I should note that Stuart Brand proposed much the same model with his 1968 *Whole Earth Catalog*.

Wisdom

Classical economics defines three factors of production: land, labor and capital. A fourth is needed: management –administrative skill, courage to take risk and leadership needed to make an enterprise flourish. This applies as well to the productive homestead. It is, in fact, entrepreneurial. It is about taking risk. For the homesteader, for the quality minded individual, management has a spiritual (non-material) dimension. Borsodi called it wisdom. To enterprise, knowledge and experience we must add understanding.

We seek to attain material comfort without sacrificing spiritual comfort. There must be a goal. The goal is to abandon the materialistic dogma of the quantity and herd minded masses and the factory society. And on this theme, we enter the final part of *This Ugly Civilization.*

PART V: THE PHILOSOPHICAL ASPECT

All crave but few are capable of experiencing what Borsodi defined as "comfort:"

> *"There can be no conquest of comfort, even though we surround ourselves with all the comfort which civilization offers us, until we answer this question for ourselves and put into the answer whatever may be needed of the accumulated knowledge of mankind, of personal experience, and of the understanding that makes for wisdom.*

We are born into a tyranny of convention. "It is a chaos of irrational, contradictory, cowardly conventions which have acquired validity not because of inherent truth and goodness and beauty but through the inertia of great antiquity and general consent." And it is "the compromises of the timid and fearful masses."

Exceptional individuals have, over the ages, given us great ideas that we may choose to apply deliberately to our lives. By doing so, an intelligent person "may live the good life, … eat freely of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil."

All of us are subject to our environment – family, school, friends, work. There are those rare people who question assumptions, beliefs and attitudes. Most are too busy to do so, too busy to read, reflect and converse with others. We need an environment that allows us to excel, to reach out. The environment can be changed by a friend, a teacher, a book a defining experience. The Superior person as Confucius noted, awakens and "can begin his[her] warfare upon the all-encircling falsehoods of our civilized convention." But we have to make the effort.

At this point Borsodi introduced his "barriers:" falsehood that are the barriers to wisdom (and therefor to comfort). They reveal themselves through self-contradiction. By comparing conventional assumptions, we reveal these falsehoods.

Borsodi raised a crucial philosophical point about the nature of order. Does order come out of Nature, out of our scientific understanding? He said no. Order in Nature is apparent but not necessary. Order is, in fact of our own devising. But to the extent that such order corresponds with truth, it is important because it promotes our survival.

[9] Within a few years he started manufacturing domestic equipment, such as looms, at the School of Living.

Truth comes out of wisdom: "The wiser we are, the profounder our knowledge, the deeper our understanding, the greater are the probabilities of our survival and the greater are the possibilities of our conquest of comfort." Our understanding of things has value "only to the extent to which they contribute to [our] survival and comfort."

> *"Only as we free ourselves from servitude to arbitrary and non-creative routines; from conventions which do not contribute to comfort – only as we give ourselves the time and leisure necessary to develop wisdom, do we begin consciously to create patterns of our own and so take on one of the attributes which give dignity to our conception of deity.*

This can happen only when the quality-minded attain sufficient freedom. It is they:

> *"who formulate what we may call mankind's laws of normality: norms deduced from the study of the necessities of human beings; norms which must be observed if men are to live comfortably; norms the violation of which are followed by premature decay and premature death."*

Wisdom must stand the same pragmatic tests as convention. It has to work. The difference is that the free person's actions are consciously directed; chosen. The wise, the quality mind, must, therefore, free themselves from convention – for their own sakes and for prosperity.

Borsodi closed this section with a poignant quote:

> *It is an ugly world, my friends. Perhaps it may be made a beautiful world, my friends.*
>
> *It is an evil world, my friends. Perhaps it may be made a good world, my friends.*
>
> *It is a foolish world, my friends. Perhaps it may be made a wise world, my friends*
>
> *Free yourselves, my friends, and it becomes yours to make it what you will*

The Barriers

Seeking the objective of obtaining wisdom we encounter the barriers to achieving it. Borsodi first used the term "problems of living" in this section. He then defined them as "barriers." There are ten of them.

Borsodi devoted several chapters to the barriers and how to overcome them. Again, the answer is education. One of the bright rays of Borsodi's genius was his capacity to penetrate to the essence of issues, to achieve a compelling clarity of understanding; something that the radical, Counterculture era, sociologist C. Wright Mills would later call a "lucid summation." Mills said that the lucid summation, the product of the sociological imagination, provided not only clarity but also the moral energy need to affect change in a broken society. Borsodi had that lucid imagination.

The barriers are, in one sense, statements of problems, and in another sense, suggest goals to be achieved. Barriers to what? The answer said Borsodi is "our individuality." Each of these barriers represents an externally composed restraint. They are all built into the way we live. And even in a "democracy" we are far less free to determine our own lives than we would wish.

Economic Barrier

We must all adopt methods to securing food, clothing and shelter. More specifically, these methods must provide security, satisfying work and independence. This is not

achieved by working to make money. Borsodi wrote: "Economically we must be dependent upon no one but ourselves and those of our own household. For to the degree in which we are dependent economically upon others, to that degree do we cease to be free to live as we would like to live."

Borsodi illustrated this barrier with the Biblical story of Jacob and Esau: When one becomes dependent upon another, they may have to sell their birthright of freedom and happiness. "The terms upon which an exchange is made between two parties are determined by the relative extent to which each is free to refuse to make the exchange." We must first achieve that freedom.

Only by satisfying the essentials of comfort, of our basic needs, by devoting ourselves to work that is satisfying, can we be "free for the expression of our own aspiration" and "make civilization less ugly than today."

Physiological Barrier

We are woefully misinformed concerning how our bodies work. We are misled into "foolish habits of eating, drinking, clothing, sheltering and caring for ourselves." The factory system devitalizes our food: we are "overfed, constipated, nerve racked, physically inferior. Hospitals, sanitariums and asylums multiply endlessly."

Yet an enormous body of information exists from which we can learn to live healthfully. We need to learn to eat properly, to exercise, to rest. We need to learn to enjoy life and that comes through good health.

Factory food is a poor substitute for home grown. It can be, and often is, unhealthy. This is being demonstrated by modern medical research. We are hurried, driven by the clock – a strain on the nerves and body.

> *"There can be no real enjoyment of comfort until we discover that the most important thing for which we ought to be in business is our health.*

Social

We all know that we are a social species; "inescapably gregarious." We are, however, expected to conform to conventions, to sacrifice our individuality. Upon examination, for the few who take the time to do so, these conventions are absurd. Borsodi wrote in depth about convention just before this part of the book.

We cannot entirely abandon social convention, but we need not engage in them to the expense of our own goodness. Conventions such as courtesy are of mutual benefit. Others deprive us of freedom and individuality. We need not be terrorized by "what they may think about us." We can learn to be free, independent and self-reliant. By achieving our economic independence, we become free to live our own lives.

Biological

We are sexual beings. Society defines our sexual behavior and roles. At the time of *This Ugly Civilization* women had only recently achieved the right to vote; women were working to break conventional barriers and stereotypes.

Parenthood, Borsodi observed, is a great adventure:

"It offers us unlimited opportunities for self-expression, yet it is the greatest of all disciplines. Parenthood, through every stage – conception, pre-natality, infancy, childhood, adolescence, mating and finally the second cycle of life – is potent with joys that can fully compensate us for the pain and suffering which seem invariable accompaniments of everything worthwhile."

Our attitudes towards sex have been institutionalized. They define the roles of women, not necessarily to their advantage. Sex has been made evil, not natural. "Hypocrisy, jealousy, frigidity, prostitution, abortion – these fruits of our present sexual conventions will remain to plague us."

The family is the basic unit of human life. Industrialism has weakened the family. To restore it to its proper place the family unit must provide for its own economic functions:

1. "It can furnish us a superior instrumentality for securing most of the essentials and many of the luxuries of life."
2. "It can furnish us with desirable conditions under which to mate, reproduce and rear our children.
3. It can provide for our social functions: "It can furnish us a really satisfying field in which and through which we can entertain, education and express ourselves.

The family is the foundation of the homestead. The family homestead is a social microcosm. Borsodi wrote:

"The development of a family on a homestead of its own is not only potent with comfort; it is potent with social progress. For the family unit's own homestead is a social microcosm.

It furnishes us the opportunity to deal with all the problems with which society as a whole has to cope. What is most important, the problems of private property, land tenure, inheritance, rent, taxation, free trade, tariff, law, education as they develop in the life of the family may be disposed of without sacrificing the unique interests of the individual to the supposed interest of the indifferent masses.

Were we to accept the family and not the factory as the true stage upon which to enact the drama of our lives, not only would we be free from the exactions of our factory-dominated civilization but the less independent rank and file of mankind would be tempted to imitate the sort of life that they would see us live in order to win a similar freedom.

And those of us who believe that life is enriched by the degree in which we individually control our environment would be able to nullify the activities of those who believe that the social environment – the factory, the church, the state – should control all of the important activities of individuals.

Religious

Fear is bred, if not born, into us. Out of fear we flee – or we strive to destroy. Fear is natural – life is dangerous. But most of our response to fear is conditioned. It is unnatural and it is irrational.

Religion has offered solace through escaping from the hard facts of life. It evades the essential facts of life. Borsodi is rather extreme on this position:

Until we utterly and completely exorcise all religion from our being; until we drop all fears, superstitions, rituals, habits, which spring from religion, no true spiritual comfort is possible; we are not properly equipped to extract from every moment of life the uttermost of truth, goodness and beauty.

Nothing is gained by shifting the point of inquiry from nature, which can be observed, measured and analyzed, to god who cannot be known and concerning whom the lowest savage and the most highly civilized man can speak with equal authority.

The wise person understands that the more we know, the more there is we do not know. He or she faces life squarely. We doubt, we question, we are what nature made us – a complex, self-aware being. We have an intelligence that allows us to create and build. Conventional religion, Borsodi asserted is "a hindrance to the formulation of an intelligent morality." That there is little universality among moral creeds suggests a lack of agreement on the nature of a supreme deity. There are questions of tremendous importance in our lives, but religion does not adequately address them, he asserted.

Is religion a means of dealing with life or a matter of conformity? Do we fear God or fear ostracism? Do we fear damnation? The sun shines and the rains fall the same upon the believer and the unbeliever. Our choice is to act within the conventions inimical to life and comfort, or to act in according to the realities of our life on this Earth.

This is one of Borsodi's longest essays about the Barriers. I don't think Borsodi is atheistic but rather non-theistic. We can summarize his argument in this statement: "We must get rid of religion, among other reasons, because it is a hinderance to the formation of a. morality intelligent enough to make possible the conquest of comfort."

"If we must have the psychic release of genuine religious experience; if we must aspire to something above our individual selves and worthy of our worship, let us devise a new worship of the lares and penates – of the spirit of the home, the family and the fireside. These at least are worthy of consecration at our hands, because they are capable of responding to the best that we may give to them.

If we must have a religion, let it be this religion which conduces to our comfort rather than erects barriers to it.

This position will be troubling to many. Much of the accumulated record of human experience is religious. Borsodi was all his life surrounded by men and women of deep faith. He expressed a deep moral spirituality a number of times. I believe his objection was to irrational dogmatism and certainly to centralization and hierarchies. He clearly understood that there is more to understanding than rational explanation. I should add that we know nothing for sure about Borsodi's family religious history.

Political

We are born into political status: citizen, subject, comrade. We can change our political status by moving to another country. We can avoid tithes, but we can't avoid taxes. If you chose not to pay taxes, or accept compulsory military service, you will likely be imprisoned. Abandonment of the state, however, gives us an alternative evil.

Government is a necessary evil. It has, however, but three functions:

1. To protect its members from antisocial activity: law enforcement and courts.
2. To protect is members from the attacks of other governments.
3. To render various social and economic services such as schools, the postal service, fire protection, water and sewer systems, roads and streets.

These functions are necessary only when they are not provided by other means and most could be provided through local, voluntary cooperation.

> *"We develop government because it is an agency which generates social control, when we should develop institutions like the family which are agencies for generating self-control"*

Do governments exist for the benefit of the public, asked Borsodi, or are they more conducive to the benefit of the governors? Bureaucracies maintain government for its own sake. There is plenty of corruption at every level of government but the higher you go, to state and national governments, the more likely it will dominate. The higher you go, the more likely the objective of elected officials tends to be power. The broader the scope of government the more the need for power, for force, for coercion, to maintain what it defines as order.

Economic independence will not free us entirely from government, but it can enormously reduce its scope. We cannot reform government from the top down. We can only do so from the grassroots – from the bottom up. By what means? Through education, the arts, self-reliance and self-sufficiency; by undertaking essential services through local collaboration; by open discussion of issues, planning and works for the common benefit. We need a local news media that is not subject to the pressure of advertisement. By developing the arts (beauty) in our communities. By electing quality-minded individuals to local authorities. By boycotting mass-produced goods. Perhaps through considered acts of civil disobedience.

Government is an idea. There are other ideas, better ideas. Must we be dependent upon government (and other centralized powers) or can we make them dependent upon the quality minded? Thousands of small communities of quality minded homesteaders would create the power of change in incremental steps. It is evolution in process but revolutionary in outcome. Ultimately the factory system and its twin – big government – will erode.

> *"In a society in which the press, the stage, and the class-room were controlled by the quality minded, leviathan would be reduced to normal dimensions. Control of the irreducible minimum of government remaining would become of little importance because the ideas of the quality-minded, rather than the interests of the quantity-minded would become of paramount interest to government officialdom."*

Our choice is between power and the power of ideas: "Whatever we are able to accomplish toward the making of a more beautiful civilization comes from the innate strength and persuasiveness of the ideas which we launch." We must be free to pursue those ideas.

Moral

Morality is another body of ideas enforced by law and convention. It is about our relationship to other human beings. Moral norms may be obeyed unquestionably – or if you have the power – ignored. There are contending bodies of morality – which do you follow? Morality, Borsodi observed, is not absolute. Moreover, it is expressed individually. He wrote: "No progress over the moral barrier is possible until we have the time and the freedom for two things: the devising of moral values of our own and the development of a self-consciousness which enables us to utilize our own values."

Moral systems seem to have less to do with ethics, with higher values, than with enforcement of conformity. We are made to feel guilty in the sight of man and/or god. We are expected to comply. We are bound by a sense of duty. These duties are arbitrary, rule-bound and inflexible. It is not an art of human relationship among equals. It is not a philosophy to guide the good life.

If every human act is a unique event, it follows that the moral equation is defined by that uniqueness – not by absolutes. Moral codes assume everyone is exactly alike. Morality, however, varies with age, through the stages of human development. Each stage has its own unique needs and conditions. The relationship between two or more people, two or more groups, is also unique. It is the art of accommodation, or perhaps a better term is collaboration. It is a process of conscious decision.

The quality of a relationship is not defined by laws or rules of etiquette, but rather by mutual respect. People form enduring associations through mutual respect. Men and women through their sense of respect have created the best social philosophies. Law has evolved and recognizes circumstance and culpable intent – the intent to harm another for personal gain.

Morality is not simply habit – it involves informed choice. Some relationships carry an overwhelming duty such as that of parents for their children – but from the beginning the family and the home have been sacrosanct domains. We must not be intimidated by religious rule. The law we can be readily challenged in court.

In summary:

> *"If we are intelligently true to ourselves, we will be as just to all whom our acts affect as we can be."*
>
> *"What we lose, however, in superficial satisfaction because of the restraints we impose upon ourselves, we more than gain by the depth of our understanding of all that we do permit ourselves to experience."*

Only a person of exceptional quality, the Superior personality, has the capacity to act morally. They act not out of fear but of courage, of intelligence, and of truth, goodness and beauty.

This Ugly Civilization is one of Borsodi's best philosophical statements. It is essentially a moral treatise. He expressed personal conclusion to key issue and these statements help define (but do not fully explain) his own moral principles. His approach of posing problems (barriers) for solutions dissolves convention. It gives us self-determination. But this too is a fundamental moral principle.

Psychological

We are emotional beings. Civilization, however, tends to make us emotional illiterates. We no longer have much contact with life, with birth and death. Our education divorces knowledge from living. Children are taught to sit still and silent in class, to be well behaved. In church we too often are required to enter the presence of deity with reserve, dignity and decorum. We hold our temper. Men don't cry. We have, in short, become psychological cripples.

"We have been made emotionally abnormal by deprivations which have dried up our affections; starved our sympathies; made us indifferent to misfortune and paralyzed our understanding."

We must learn to engage with life and the emotions nature has endowed us with. This doesn't come from books but rather from engagement with life, engagement free of conventions.

"Here self-sufficiency can serve us supremely well. It not only releases us from servitude to the factory-dominated civilization which today aborts our psychological development, but it furnishes us in place of it a whole life of emotional education through contact with reality.

"And in thus reducing our emotional maladjustment to life and stimulating our emotional adaptation to it, we tend to overcome the psychological barrier to comfort.

Educational

Because we think, what we learn is of the greatest importance. Few of us, however, learn to think well. Education is something we undertake only early in life, in school. The school does not seek to equip us for life, for a job yes, but not for living.

"It is the possession of this faculty of thinking with its limitless capacity for enriching life which gives to education its great importance.

The factory system demands narrow specialization, and the schools respond. Colleges are vocational schools. They prepare us for making money, for success. A few of us are ruthless enough to climb to the top of the system of acquisition.

Part of educational is vocational; however, "The matter of equipping us for living beautifully is relegated to a subordinate place when it is not entirely forgotten by our educational institutions."

Borsodi concluded:

Education ceases to be a barrier to comfort only if we can afford to make the whole of life a two-fold process – a process of acquiring facts about living, and of acquiring understanding of their significance. The two processes must continue unremittingly throughout life.

A lifetime devoted to such education may not, it is true, make us perfectly wise, but it should at least make us wise enough to escape from the false values to which the masses of mankind unthinkingly dedication their existence.

Individual

We are individuals, each with unique needs and desires. We crave the joy that we can secure from doing creative work. However, "The greater our individual endowment, the greater is the antithesis with which life confronts us." We are torn between the desire for society and the desire to be ourselves, between wealth and joy:

If we are to conquer this final barrier to comfort, we must resolve the conflict between our individual desires and cravings for a personal fulfillment and the demands and limitations which marriage and home and society place upon us. We must end the antithesis between our own ego and the other egos with which it is necessary for us to come to terms.

Borsodi answered this dilemma with the idea of friendship: "For friendship offers us the only satisfying synthesis between ourselves and our fellow human beings." He added:

"the joys of life are doubled and redoubled when we can share them and live them over and over with our friends."

The bonds of friendship are weakened by the hundreds of contacts that define our lives[10]. In the midst of crowds, we feel alone. "The more efficiently we complicate our lives, the more certainly do we destroy the conditions under which we can really come to know each other." And further: "For the cultivation of friends we need above all time for conversation and freedom to be ourselves – neither of which this factory-dominated civilization dares accord us." When we share the joys of life, we redouble that joy. Life becomes beautiful to the degree that we are able to freely express ourselves and that free expression comes only with friends and loved ones.

"Civilization becomes beautiful in the degree to which those who are capable of contributing beauty are free to express themselves." This includes friendship and it includes leadership: "Those who have something exceptional to contribute; those whom nature has endowed with greater powers than conferred upon the average men and women, must be free to express themselves fully, not only for their own sake, but for the sake of mankind."

We have a choice of devoting ourselves to self-expression or cultivating the social life, or somehow both. Rejecting either diminishes us. Family and friends are part of our lives.

> *"Both the personal and social aspects of life must, if they are to be made endurable, be infused with our genius. Certainly, if we aspire to be superior beings, that superiority should be used to ennoble every task in life and not our special talents only.*

But first we must find individual security; the freedom and power to act in our own best interest and the best interest of others.

L'ENVOI

L'envoi means concluding remarks. Borsodi concludes *This Ugly Civilization* with lines of poetry and a parting personal message, a personal declaration of independence. The opening quote is from Nietzsche's *Thus Spake Zarathustra*. Borsodi used quotes from Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* to open each section of the book. Those perceptive enough will find these quotes thoughtful; and perhaps feel curiosity about what is behind them. Nietzsche was a radical and controversial philosopher. He used Zarathustra to announce the death of god and the ascent of the overman.

I do not see that Borsodi shared Nietzsche philosophical pretensions, but he did share in the vision of the true individual – a vision represented in Jefferson, Thoreau and Emerson – all who preceded Nietzsche. Nietzsche also understood the failing of modern industrial civilization and laid the foundation for reactionary philosophy, particularly existentialism. Existentialism tends to be defeatist and fatalistic. Borsodi was no existentialist.

Borsodi does, in fact, give an odd twist to the Zarathustra story. It starts on a mountain from which Zarathustra descends into the world after a long period of contemplation. Borsodi, paraphrasing Nietzsche, wrote:

[10] And now we live in an impersonal Facebook/Twitter world.

"The factory has taken us up on an exceedingly high mountain and shown us all the great cities of the world, and the riches within them.

"All these things are yours, the factory says, on condition only that you bow down and serve me. Abandon strange and dangerous ideas of your own. Think only of my greater glory. Sink your initiative and your individuality in the conventions that sustain me, and riches beyond the wildest dream of Croesus shall be yours and your children's.

It is this god that Borsodi declared dead.

Why did he write the book? His answer is that it was not that he had any hope that the masses of men would read it. You can show them the way to comfort but "they not only lack the will to achieve comfort; they lack even the desire to attain it." They will live by convention and for convention.

"Why then have I spent all this time to tell the story of my quest for comfort, he asked?

First,

"Because a cold rage seizes one at whiles
To show the bitter, old and wrinkled truth
Stripped naked of all vesture that beguiles,
False dreams, false hope, false masks and modes of you;
Because it gives some sense of power and passion
In helpless impotence to try to fashion
Our woe in living words howe'er uncouth.

And second,

Here and there some weary wanderer
In that same city of tremendous night,
Will understand the speech, and feel a stir
Of fellowship in all-disastrous flight;
"I suffer mute and lonely, yet another
Uplifts this voice to let me know a brother
Travels the same wild paths though out of sight. [11]

Borsodi concluded the book with some lines of his own, a reflection of Zarathustra's own parting words:

And so good-bye.

You probably will continue as before. And so shall I.

But I, at least, am free to continue the quest of comfort on my own small domain – mine as long as I can scrape together the taxes which the state levies upon it.

I, at least, have the opportunity to work out a manner of living for myself without regard to the life that landlords, tradesmen and manufacturers would impose upon me.

[11] Both of these quotes are from poet James Thomson, *The City of Dreadful Night*

I, at least, can say to the factory:

"Get thee hence. I want thy riches not, because I need them not."

A comfortable home in which to labor and to play, with trees and grass and flowers and skies and stars; a small garden; a few fruit trees, some fowls, some kine, some bees; and three big dogs to keep the salesmen out – and I, at least have time for love, for children, for a few friends, and for the work I like to do.

More the world can give to no man, and more no man can give to the world.

Chapter 3

Homesteader and Community

Following the end of World War I, Ralph Borsodi made a life-defining decision. The years following the War brought a serious recession, rising rents and a pandemic. He decided to leave New York City and take his family back to the land and became a homesteader.

Borsodi had a small salary ($50 per week), little capital and two children. He set out to find:

> *"… [a] location near the railroad station because we had no automobile; five to ten acres of land with fruit trees, garden space, pasturage, a woodlot and if possible, a brook; a location where electricity was available, and last but not least, a low purchase price.*

He secured a small parcel of land a short commute from New York City and moved his family there. He kept his job in the city.

Borsodi's decision was an informed one. He was strongly influenced by American economist and land reformer Henry George. He became active in the Georgist movement by at least 1903. Borsodi knew leading Georgist Bolton Hall and was influenced by two of Hall's books, *Three Acres and Liberty* (1907) and *A Little Land and Living* (1908).

Bolton Hall

Hall's life and work are included in the "Homesteader" chapter of *The Green Revolution*. I will briefly summarize his ideas that I believe most influenced Borsodi.

Bolton Hall (1854 – 1938) was an attorney who worked with the poor and labor organizations and was active in the Progressive movement. He attended Princeton and Colombia Law School. He became a leading supporter of Henry George. Hall wrote 20 books, undertook a number of practical sustainable projects and is credited with coining the "back-to-the-land" slogan.

Hall started an urban agriculture program prior to 1908, the Vacant Lot Gardening Association in New York City, that had about 200 members. He then sought a training farm "within 90 minutes of NYC" as a school of small farming. He had a number of well-known backers including J. P. Morgan. In 1910 he deeded 68 acres of land he owned to establish Free Acres in New Jersey 33 miles west of New York City founded on Georgist principles

In his *Three Acres and Liberty* (1907), Hall proposed a local food economy based on urban gardens and small farms located around cities. He provided some history about the Vacant Lot program first started during the economic Panic of 1897and wrote about the Philadelphia program he considered a model. By 1903 there were 800 families tilling 200 acres in Philadelphia. Hall believed urban gardens could produce a fair income in local markets. Hall also encouraged city dwellers to start small farms near the city to supply local markets – truck farms.

In his *A Little Land and Living* (1908) Hall further developed his thesis. Borsodi's father William wrote a long letter that was included as the first chapter of the book. He argued that a small farm is a refuge from business stagnation, offers a healthy outdoor life, and provides a productive and comfortable home. Hall described gardening as a start towards the farm life. A lot of the book is practical gardening advice.

Sevenacres

The homesteader story about Borsodi is told in the companion volume, subtitled *The Green Revolution*. I will summarize certain key points related to his homesteading experience in this chapter to give context to his work as they apply to the development of his education ideas. This chapter covers the years between his beginning homesteading and founding his School of Living, 1920 to 1934, and a bit more.

The Borsodi family moved to a small farm they named Sevenacres near Suffern, New York, in 1920. They planted a garden, rebuilt an old house, installed electricity and plumbing. They had a lot to learn. While Myrtle Mae, his wife, had grown up on a farm, I think it is safe to say that Borsodi was a city man. He learned to use tools. He remodeled the house and constructed outbuildings. He gardened and raised poultry and goats. He brought in electricity. He and Myrtle Mae sought to eliminate drudgery by buying or making domestic machinery. By the following year they felt settled.

Over the next few years, Borsodi and Myrtle Mae systematically developed their homestead model. He carefully documented what Myrtle Mae did in the domestic arts. After four years at Sevenacres and learning the ropes of homesteading, Borsodi bought a larger property nearby and built a fine stone house. They named it Dogwoods.

This homestead helped Borsodi to achieve greater personal independence. He had a philosophy about self-reliance, and he had walked his talk. There was, however, more to Borsodi's agenda. He had a mission. It is clear that Borsodi intended to create a learning environment from the start. He considered Dogwoods a working homesteading laboratory. The Borsodi's invited friends from the city to spend weekends to learn gardening and building and to prepare them to start their own homesteads. In short, Borsodi started a school. He taught skills but obviously had a broader agenda: a philosophy of life lived well on the land. He was troubled by the economic, social and psychological effects of massive industrialization not only on the economy but on the conduct of life. He wanted to establish an alternative, more humane, way of life.

Borsodi always consider himself an economist and an educator. While still a teen he made soapbox talks on street corner to support the Henry George movement. He edited the organization's newsletter and he apparently taught classes. In Texas he took over a small rural newspaper. In his work he consulted and wrote advertising for his clients. We know he spoke at conferences as an economist. His first book was a manual on accounting to help small businesses.

We know that Borsodi was influenced by Thomas Jefferson, a champion of education and founder of a university. He was influenced by Thomas Paine who wrote to translate complex issues into common sense language to mobilize support for the American Revolution. While he doesn't talk about Franklin, I can't believe Borsodi hadn't studied him.

Franklin, like Borsodi a printer and publisher, encouraged learning, built libraries and developed societies to promote critical thinking and clear communication. Most of the writers Borsodi quoted were educators or philosophers who wrote about the conduct of life, of learning and living.

While at Dogwoods, during the 1920s, Borsodi wrote four books. The first was related to his business, his handbook on accounting. There were two books that established him as a pioneer consumer advocate. Borsodi's economics work is included in this book in large part because it defines his philosophy and provides much of the foundation for his educational program.

The fourth book, *This Ugly Civilization* (1929, republished in 2019 with a new introduction by me) has a very different message. It is radical and revolutionary. *This Ugly Civilization* became the cornerstone of his lifework. I have included my review of *This Ugly Civilization* in a following chapter. In brief, however, in it we find Borsodi's manifesto for cultural change. It is not about reforming the economy; it is about transforming it. There are three main topics in the book:

1. Borsodi the economist wrote a stunning critique of the American industrial-commercial economy. He was not anti-capital, but he found the system flawed. And within weeks of the book's publication, that system did fail, and the Great Depression began.
2. Borsodi had a readymade solution: the homestead. *This Ugly Civilization* included a good business case for going back-to-the-land.
3. Borsodi also proposed a systematic educational program to prepare people for evolutionary cultural change.

Dayton

In 1933 Borsodi was involved in a project that would be another defining experience. He was called to Dayton, Ohio to advise in the development of a homesteading community project. Prior to Dayton, Borsodi's objective was personal independence offered by a homestead. At Dayton he first developed his innovative community land trust model. That story is told in the "Dayton" chapter in *The Green Revolution*. I will briefly describe what he took from the Dayton experience and I believe it will help understand the work he undertook with his School of Living.

Leaders in Dayton were attracted to *This Ugly Civilization*. A second edition of that book was published in 1933. Also that year his homesteading handbook, *Flight from the City: An Experiment in Creative Living on the Land* was published. Borsodi was first invited to Dayton for a consultation in January 1933, returned several times, and was hired to assist with the project in May 1933, and stayed just over a year.

Two years later, in his introduction to the second edition of *Flight from the City* (1935), Borsodi wrote of his disappointment with the Dayton experiment. He observed that personal and communal homesteading were two very different things. But he believed the model he developed for both was sound. It had been defeated in large part by "federalization." At the end of the book, he added a section that included several articles he

had written during the Dayton project. I think we need to define this as an interim report written while he was still at Dayton.

In that edition, Borsodi also introduced his School of Living and included a statement of its mission. With his School of Living, he was clearly seeking a more workable alternative to creating homestead communities.

Great Depression and Dayton

When the Great Depression started in 1929 President Herbert Hoover's thought it would be over by the following year. It steadily deepened. In 1931 Hoover established the Commission on Unemployment Relief that organized a subsistence farm program for unemployed miners in the Ohio River valley. Hoover's objective was local initiative, not government funded programs.

In 1932 Dayton, Ohio followed this grassroots model for its unemployed factory workers by developing "Production Units." By 1933 there were ten Production Units with perhaps 500 families involved. They produced food and a variety of household goods. Borsodi proposed a plan to develop a ring of homesteading communities around the city. The first of homestead projects was established in April 1933.

The Borsodi Plan: Borsodi at Dayton

Borsodi's first public report on the Dayton homesteading project came out April 19, 1933 in an article in *The Nation*: "Dayton, Ohio, Makes Social History." This brief document is clearly Borsodi's manifesto. In the first sentence he proclaimed the project as "the stage for an important economic, social and educational experiment." The objective was to ring the city with Homestead Units (he called them "colonies") of 35 – 40 families on two acre lots. The objective of these communities, he wrote, "represents an attempt to solve the dilemmas of the machine age along entirely new lines." What makes the project distinctive is that, unlike hundreds of similar movements across the country, rather than based on production for sale it is about production for use. It represents a better way of living rather than a temporary solution for people "now struggling for happiness in our industrial civilization."

Borsodi acknowledged the progress of the Dayton Production Units. He wrote that the Production Units were to be kept small but nonetheless, they must be adequately managed, and that "exceptional leadership" is required. That statement about leadership I think a key to this story. This would obviously require an educational program.

These Homestead Units were planned to be located with 15 miles of Dayton so homesteaders could also eventually return to work in the city. The land would be owned cooperatively and made available to families by perpetual lease agreement. Families would build their own homes, "a poultry house, cowshed, workshop and cultivate a garden, set out an orchard and berry patch." They would grow their own food and achieve self-sufficiency much as the early pioneers did. The homesteads would provide food and raw materials in exchange (barter) for finished goods. Cooperatives would be formed for larger-scale operations such as grain. Trades and crafts would also be developed. There would be electricity for lighting and power. He re-emphasized that the land would be held in trust.

He summarized[12]:

> *"The outstanding fact about these homesteads is that they are designed not only for family gardening, but for family weaving and sewing and family activities in all the crafts which have been neglected for so many years. The loom room and the workshop, with all their opportunities for self-expression and creative education, are once again to become part of the American scene. …. that they fulfilled in the early American home – to furnish economic independence, security and self-sufficiency."*

Borsodi made his case for more efficient technology to eliminate drudgery and increase productivity:

> *"The homestead will furnish the security of which industrialism has deprived us. What I called domestic machinery[13] in my last book, in contrast to factory machinery, is to be given a chance to free the unemployed of Dayton from the dependence upon industry and make possible a higher standard of living than they ever before enjoyed."*

Borsodi argued for decentration, "making the home rather than the factory the economic center of life and turning to education and the artist-teacher rather than to the politician and the technical specialist for a way out."

"Thus, Dayton is making social history. …. Something really new is emerging from its struggle with the problem of relief."

In a second article, a further account of the Dayton experiment, Borsodi wrote:

> *"Since the above report was written, the goal for the coming year in Dayton, provided the necessary capital can be secured, is to establish fifty Homestead Units to enable between 1,750 and 2,000 families to make themselves self-sufficient and secure even under present-day depression conditions."*

Following this statement, he provided a more in-depth business plan.

Borsodi reiterated what he thought the philosophy of the Dayton project should be, summarizing his article in *The Nation*: It, first of all, "represents an attempt to solve the dilemmas of the machine age along entirely new lines." Second, is to provide production for consumption, not for sale. Third, it is "not only a temporary solution for the problem of unemployment but a permanently better way of living for every man, woman, and child now struggling for happiness in our industrial civilization."

Borsodi stated what might be called his declaration of independence: "Dayton is not waiting for economic planning in order to find some way of taming the machine. It is decentralizing production, instead of integrating it; and eliminating distribution costs by making the point of production and the point of consumption one and the same. It is making the home, rather than the factory, the economic center of life, and turning to education, and the artist-teacher rather than to the politician and the technical specialists for a way out. Dayton promises to make social history. Something really new is emerging from its struggle with the problem of relief." Here we see a clear statement about education.

Borsodi included "Extracts from the Constitution of the First Homestead Unit" which I further extract:

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[12] These homestead principles were already expressed in *This Ugly Civilization* and exemplified in Borsodi's own homestead.
[13] This was the beginning of appropriate technology Schumacher popularized 40 years later.

"We the undersigned, in order to secure the opportunity to:

Satisfy our needs and desires directly by production for our own use through intensive husbandry and home craftsmanship

Achieve a permanent basis of economic independence and security

Develop a progressively higher standard of living

Enrich family and home life by reducing drudgery and releasing creative activity through the use of domestic machinery

Increase control over our destinies by solving our problems through simple family and neighborhood activities rather than through large, complicated and impersonal civic and industrial relationships, and

Furnish to the community of Dayton, which is assisting us to establish ourselves on homesteads, an example of effectual and beautiful living, to associate ourselves together to form a community of homesteads and pledge ourselves to abide by the provisions of this constitution.

He added a right of members "to the development of a completely individual life."

Borsodi also proposed a lease agreement for each homestead which not only outlined the conditions of the lease but served to keep the land in trust and put the land beyond the reach of probate courts. The lessee has the right to dispose of "improvements."

Borsodi concluded this article with a statement by Walter Locke, vice-president of the Unit Committee, that was published in *The Dayton News*. Locke advocated a back-to-the-land solution for the ongoing economic depression. He described, in his own words, the objective Borsodi advocated: a few acres for a productive family garden to support a job in town, and to provide security when there was no work. Cash production is not, he argued, the answer. Neither is laboring as an exclusive means of livelihood. The homestead represents the middle ground. He concluded: "Till industry and agriculture can both, by a growth in wisdom, be made safe for democracy, this halfway place of refuge, the combination of the two gives challenge to our thought."

In January 1934, Borsodi wrote another article, "Subsistence Homesteads: President Roosevelt's New Land and Population Policy." Borsodi opened this article about the federal Subsistence Homesteads program on a positive note. He thought the Roosevelt administration was going in the right direction – a redistribution of the population out of the cities and back to the land.

He also shared: "The advantages of this plan for homestead colonization recently summarized by a writer in *The Architectural Forum* present the views of a competent and disinterested observer:

1. *The advantage of greater individual freedom which can be enjoyed by the households on the various homesteads together with the possibility of as much collective activity as the group freely chooses to carry on.*
2. *The emphasis on family life where a family as a unit will produce its basic necessities and therefore where the influence will be in the direction of binding the family together rather than driving the members apart in the case of the present situation.*
3. *A sense of permanence and economic security which will grow out of the homes actually owned by the homesteaders to which they will be attached because the homes will be largely the work of their own hands and the result of their own planning.*

4. *The combination of small electrical machinery with subsistence farming will give families ample food and clothing with much of the drudgery eliminated.*

The outcome would realize Borsodi's dream of a post-industrial economy, one that would be free of economic instability. To make it a national movement, Borsodi asserted, is not only an economic or agricultural problem, "*but primarily an educational problem*." He wrote:

> *"The really difficult problem is that of inspiring and training families – for this is a family undertaking – to change their notions of the good life, and their ways of securing the necessities and satisfactions of life. In some way they will have to be taught to think in terms of years instead of weekly pay-envelopes; to look upon the earning of cash as something to which they ought to devote only part of their time, and to secure their satisfactions out of creative and self-expressive activities instead of out of conspicuous consumption and vicarious play. Homesteading is, then, in the last analysis, a problem in adult education and as such must secure the right kind of educational leadership."*

Borsodi concluded this article with "Three things are needed in order to realize the possibilities of the movement:"

> *"First, definition. Among those working at one phase or another of the back-to-the-land movement there is the widest disagreement as to what constitutes a subsistence homestead. Is it only half an acre, or can it be as much as fifty acres? Should homesteading be confined to areas around places where industrial employment can be secured, or should it include farm colonization projects in which crops such as cotton furnish the cash income of the homesteader? A National Conference on Subsistence Homesteading is meeting in Dayton[14] as this issue of Survey Graphic is in press and may furnish a definition.*
>
> *"Second, an organizing and educational institution covering the whole country. To provide the continuous education needs for a period of years, as well as to furnish the government with responsible local institution for supervising homestead groups which loans are made, the cooperation of established institutions, such as state agricultural and mechanical colleges, must be enlist in the movement.*
>
> *"Finally, there is the necessity for securing ample capital finance for the homesteaders and the communities they establish. While thousands of families have or can secure the little capital needed to start homesteading individually, there are hundreds, thousands well fitted for homesteading who are unable to consider it because of lack of finances. The $25 million government funds available at present is sufficient only for a comparatively small number of these families. Therefore, as soon as the division is ready for the expansion of the work, Congress should appropriate ample funds for this purpose. In what better way could government money be spent in an effort to help thousands of hard-working families rendered helpless by the depression and to bring about business recovery? Most of the money would actually be used to purchase lumber, cement, hardware, tools, tractors, agricultural implements and small machinery of many kinds and would therefore increase employment in the very industries now operating at the low levels. I therefore suggest that Congress consider carefully the possibility of appropriating at least a billion dollars for this purpose in 1934. By this means the business of putting the new land and population policy into effect would be promptly got under way.*

As further described in the chapters in *The Green Revolution*, these principles would guide much of Borsodi's work from the founding of his School of Living until at least the publication of *Education and Living* in 1948. They would appear again during the last decade of his life. Following is a very brief summary of that development.

[14] The Subsistence Homesteading Conference met March 24, 1933 at the Miami Hotel in Dayton. It was organized by the Dayton Unit Committee. Borsodi spoke about subsistence homesteading.

Back to Suffern

That the Dayton project was complicated is an understatement. There were numerous local and often conflicting interests and the arrival of federal authority added fuel to the fire. Borsodi threw in the towel and returned to Suffern in July 1934. The Dayton project ultimately failed. The federal Subsistence Homesteading program also failed.

Borsodi was the Dayton project visionary, planner and a prophet of a new era. He was on a crusade. His reports provide a synthesis of the ideas he developed during his association with the Dayton project. The tryptic is clearly stated: Productive family homesteads, collaborative community and education. Education had become the foundation of his program. As we see, he conducted educational programs at Dayton and he had strongly advocated a national educational program to promote the homesteading model.

Two months after returning to his homestead at Suffern, Borsodi started his School of Living. That story is in the next chapter. The following year, 1935, he established the Independence Foundation, Inc., to raise money to acquire land for homesteading communities. He established two of them, at Suffern and at nearby West Nyack, and set out to acquire several other properties. That story is found in the "Bayard Land" chapter of *The Green Revolution*.

In 1938 Borsodi elaborated his economic theory in his *Prosperity and Security* (below) and in 1939 joined two USDA leaders in further describing his homesteading model in *Agriculture in Modern Life*.

World War II brought this phase of Borsodi's work to an end. The School of Living was closed at Suffern and transferred to Mildred's Lane's End homestead in Ohio in 1945. Following the war, Borsodi completed his *Education and Living* in which he clearly defined the objective of his educational program: the normal (optimal) individual, the normal family and the normal community. In that book he also publicly introduced his problem-centered model of education. He also wrote of a "community university."

Between founding the School of Living in 1934 and 1945, Borsodi and his wife produced a considerable literature (listed in the "School of Living" chapter), they developed a solid library, he conducted seminars, traveled and lecture, provided leadership in decentralism, developed his problem-centered system and an extensive seminar course.

Borsodi went on to another community experiment in 1949 at Melbourne, Florida and there expanded his School into the University of Melbourne. Those stories are told below. Borsodi would continue that work in India and then back in the US.

In 1967, following completion of his *Seventeen Problems of Man and Society* manuscript (published 1968), Borsodi embarked on yet another community land trust program. This involved establishing an international organization, working closely with friends in India and forming the Internal Independence Institute (III), headquartered in Exeter where he then lived. The international organization was intended to raise funding for land trust. The III, with Borsodi as executive director, was created to promote and provide educational support for land trusts.

Borsodi worked closely with Bob Swann and Bob worked closely with a group of African American agrarians in Georgia. The result was a well-organized homestead community experiment called New Communities. It became a model for Community Land Trust. Another project, again partnering with Bob Swann, was a local currency. Bob would later form the Schumacher Center in Connecticut. There are chapters on both of these projects in *The Green Revolution*

Conclusion

There is lot of literature about the loss of community due to industrialization. It is very hard to restore. The legacy Borsodi left with the III Community Land Trust, however, has been significant, in a qualified sense. The model has been widely adopted by urban authorities primarily for affordable housing. Urban CLTs rarely representing a communal association. Intentionally communities, often founded as rural CLTs, are too rarely successful. Most people attracted to such "communes" are motivated by self-interest. There is more of that story in *The Green Revolution*.

There are exceptional communal groups. These are formed on principles. Bryn Gweled was founded by Quakers. New Communities was an African-America civil rights enterprise. The Amish and Mormons are successful forming communities. Many religious bodies do, or seek to, build community although it is becoming harder for them. Some colleges achieve a mystique, and I don't mean in sports. St. John's College, a rare example, achieved distinction through its unique Great Books curriculum. Borsodi prepared a plan for forming a community around it to meet its basic needs.

Non-profits with a clear mission, members and volunteers can achieve long-lasting communal association. Bob Swann's Schumacher Centre is an example of a lasting legacy. Scott and Helen Nearing's legacy, as model homesteaders, was preserved.

All of these successful enterprises share some common features. One is a clear vision to which members adhere. There is a moral imperative that mobilizes the people involved. And they pursue planning, organization, leadership and ongoing education – both internally and publicly.

Borsodi spent decades developing his educational program to assist individuals achieve resiliency. Such individuals are the building blocks of good community.

Long before I learned about Borsodi, the Cove Institute project took on the job of developing resilient personality, the Well-Formed Personality, and Well-Formed Community made up of them. We called our model a Resilient Learning Community. Borsodi, I learned, had a great deal to say about our core principles and practices. And that made restoring his legacy something of an imperative. This book, *Learning and Living*, seeks to achieve that objective. It seeks a synthesis of educational practices that are effective. It also proposes to bring this model up to date to address the challenges of the twenty-first century.

Chapter 4

The School of Living

Upon Borsodi leaving Dayton in mid-July 1934 after a year of working with them to develop homesteading communities, it took him just two months to establish the School of Living. As he pondered why the Dayton project had gone off the tracks, he asked how and why the homesteaders could make such an obvious error in judgment by letting the government take over the project? Why did the leaders of the program, who originally sided with him, back down in the face of government domination? I believe he felt of greater importance was the overall lack of a sense of the essential mission of homesteading – local self-reliance. His position was clearly justified by the course of the failed government takeover of subsistence homesteading across the country.

Borsodi left Dayton just a little more than 14 years following the establishment of his family homestead. He had accomplished a lot before and since that flight from the city in 1920. This next phase of his life would occupy another 15 years, starting with the founding of the School of Living on September 3, 1934, and formal incorporation in New York (October 9, 1935). Management of the School was given to nine regents, three elected each year. Borsodi was listed as Chancellor and Lecturer. Other staff included Robert E. Toms, Dean and Instructor; Agnes J. Toms, Association Dean and Instructor; Edward M. Borsodi, Bursar; Emma Munsell, Clerk and Librarian; and Helen Matoske, Registrar.

A Philosophy of the Good Life

Borsodi often said that what we most need is a philosophy to guide the way we live our lives. For Borsodi, that philosophy grew out of reading, participation with the Georgist movement, and engagement with a growing network of leading minds. In part, where Borsodi's philosophy was going can be found in the Jeffersonian ideal, which was both an agrarian and an educational ideal. Jefferson believed that a free, self-sufficient people must be educated, and that society would be guided by those with a knack for both learning and for leading. He, and many of the other Founding Fathers, exemplified this ideal.

Borsodi advocated personal independence and economic self-sufficiency – in short, personal freedom. Was that ideal something the Dayton homesteaders wanted? Freedom comes at a high cost. Were they willing to work for it? Or did they just want relief – for which they would pay with dependency. Borsodi concluded that they were poorly informed; they lacked the adequate education to make the thoughtful decisions agrarian democracy mandates.

Borsodi well knew that the public would not readily accept sweeping changes. He had already documented the barriers he saw to the acceptance of social innovation. At the root of the change process would have to be systematic education and leadership development.

In *Flight From the City* published in late 1933, Borsodi stated that many had responded to *This Ugly Civilization*; that they wanted to return to the land. He also showed the mass migration from farm to city that had occurred with a table of population numbers from 1910 to 1933. This, he knew, was due in no small part to industrialization. He observed that people were dissatisfied with both rural and with urban living. He proposed a middle way – the family homestead near large cities – a dual life in the garden and in the office or factory or personal craft, trade or business.

He believed that the Great Depression, an economic crisis, was a symptom of the age, that it marked a transitional period.

> *"Industrial civilization is either on the verge of collapse or of rebirth on a new social basis. Men and women who desire to escape from dependence upon the present industrial system and so have no desire to substitute for it dependence upon a state controlled system, are beginning to experiment with a way of living which is neither city life nor farm life, but which is an effort to combine the advantages and to escape the disadvantages of both."*

Flight From the City was a handbook for homesteaders produced at Borsodi's publishers request. It received good reviews from the *New York Times, Cincinnati Enquirer, Boston Transcript*, and *The Nation*. It was also a blueprint for building an alternative culture. In the prelude to the first edition he noted that the Dayton homesteading project had been in progress for nearly a year, "a sociological experiment of far-reaching significance." That theme was further developed in the "Introduction" to the second, 1935, edition.

The focus is clearly decentralism, and it is important to note that this was a term carefully chosen by Borsodi. As we will see below, there was a strong "distributist" movement in the country which Borsodi was part of. It originated in Great Britain but likely had roots in Henry George (George was extremely popular in Europe). Borsodi further developed that idea and gave it a context more appropriate to emerging conditions. Chapter 11 describes this movement.

Distributionism, or decentralization, was in part about getting people back to the land. It was about restoring the family farm, family production of its needs, and agrarian roots and tradition. Borsodi exemplified this ideal. In *This Ugly Civilization* he made it clear that we need to end centralization of industry, economy, government; education and even religion. *Flight From the City* described how families could break the cycle and achieve the security that had been lost in both the cities and countryside. And he demonstrated how his family did that.

Borsodi emphasized that this movement wasn't just people seeking escape and going back to a simpler life; it is "a conscious and planned movement" that requires "distinguished leaders in education" and with that he introduced "schools of living." In the second edition he announced that the first such School of Living had been formed "this winter in connection with a homestead project near New York City at Suffern, New York." He outlined the purpose of the school:

- To associate a select group of artists, craftsman and teachers in a demonstration of the contribution which decentralized, self-sufficient living in the country may make to redress the economic and psychological insecurity of our industrialized civilization
- To study and develop the possibilities of the home and homestead as a productive and creative institution
- To furnish to men and women the opportunity to follow a carefully developed plan of learning and experiences in living securely, comfortably and richly and in leading others to live equally well
- To offer those who may be able to come for short visits only a place to see and study the relationship of homesteading and domestic produce:

- To the past, present and future
- To our present industrialized, centralized, organized, political society; and
- To make life more meaningful to themselves here and now.

This statement was also published in an article in the January 1935 issue of *Progressive Education*, four months after the founding of the School of Living.

Kikiat

"Kakiat Farm," temporary quarters of the School of Living, located at 144 Spook Rock Road. Date of photo unknown. ***Photo courtesy of Mr. & Mrs. Roger Hazelton.***

Borsodi acquired a farmhouse, named Kikiat, just north of his homestead. It was remodeled to provide a meeting room and library, and books were moved there from Dogwoods. On September 3, 1934, 40 people first met at Kikiat to open the School of Living. Gathering in a circle outside they transplanted a tree from Dogwoods. Mildred Loomis reported the dedication (and this became the motto of the School of Living): "Let this tree," said Borsodi, "be a symbol of life and living." His son added: "Let a tree of life be the emblem of the School of Living." Myrtle Mae spoke next: "Let the tree remind us the Creation dignifies labor, justifies suffering and gives significance to life." A tree has been the symbol of the School of Living from that beginning, and there was a tapestry of the tree of living, possibly woven on the Borsodi loom, from that time which followed Mildred to Lane's end and then to Heathcote where it was, unfortunately, lost. Over the years the image of the tree changed a number of times until it became a rather new age symbol.

Like many abstractions, the original meaning was lost. That symbol, of course, is an ancient symbol which goes back to the Garden of Eden in the Judeo-Christian tradition. Jung had his representation of the tree of life. So did J.R.R. Tolkien. The resemblance of theirs to the original School of Living tree is striking.

The dogwood itself is symbolic. It flowers early and heralds the spring, a season of new life, of rebirth. Borsodi's tapestry appears to represent the branches of how the universal problems unite to the trunk, an integral system, and with deep roots in the accumulated wisdom of humankind.

Bayard Lane

In his 1935 "Introduction" to *Flight From the City*, Borsodi made it clear about the pursuit of what he called "homestead colonization." Referencing the Dayton experiment, each "unit" was to average 40 families. Perhaps a better word would have been "community." But the necessary community was difficult to achieve, in no small part the result of federalization of the project in the Spring of 1934 by Interior Secretary Harold Ickes. Borsodi expressed his skepticism that homestead projects could be established by

political means. This statement gives an important perspective about how the School of Living program was to progress.

In 1935 Borsodi founded his first private land trust homesteading community at Bayard Lane near Suffern. He acquired 40 acres of land divided into two-acre homesteading sites. That year construction of the first of sixteen homes was begun.

In 1936 he built the headquarters of the School of Living in the middle of the development. It had four acres of land for gardening and recreational activity. The staff raised most of their own food and conducted other productive activities. It had a meeting room, library and office, a modern kitchen, and dormitory space upstairs for eight people.

Core Principles of the School of Living

Borsodi firmly believed that we must make education, in the pure meaning of the term – to bring out our true potential – the center of each of our lives. It is also part of what I would call Borsodi's triptych:

1. He proposed a learning institution, the School of Living, which promotes adult, problem-centered education where people could draw on the accumulated wisdom of our species, develop critical thinking and form character. The School of Living is the central feature of the community.
2. He placed the School of Living at the center of a community, a small, collaborative community, which provides collective security.
3. In order to break the shackles of economic thralldom, each family of the community must achieve financial independence. This is achieved through the homestead.

These three principles are the heart and soul of the School of Living, as they are the heart and soul of American democracy. It was in the formation of the American Republic that these principles were first actualized, or at least tried. But from the start there were countervailing political forces. Over the course of now more than two centuries, thoughtful men and women have struggled to keep those traditional principles alive. On the balance, in this 21st century, we are losing ground at an alarming rate. This is an apocalyptic time, but in that old literature we are called to stand firm for our humanity.

The homesteading community and the School of Living are not two separate things. The idea of two sides of a coin is almost an understatement in describing the intimate association between these two seminal ideas. The model is an evolutionary development of the ingredients of an ideal democratic society that goes back to Tom Paine and Thomas Jefferson and about which Emerson had much to say. Jefferson believed that a self-governing people must be well-educated, up to date on events, critical in their thinking and proficient in dialog and collective decision-making. Emerson wrote and spoke extensively about the creation of a noble character through focused learning, living on the land and pursuit of the ideals that define our humanity. (We could add Whitman's poetry to

this list.) Borsodi synthesized these great ideas, and others from the classics and the East, into a very practical and modern arrangement.

And who are the leaders of the School of Living homesteading community? The answer is teachers. The teachers are not necessarily college-educated professionals but local men and women who through a life of study and living have developed a deep wisdom, who are impelled by a sense of compassion and an authentic desire to serve their community.

The School of Living is the catalyst of a self-sufficient body of people that forms community. It serves a society of people who enjoy a special quality of mind which is found in communal association with people seeking an optimal way of life. Society is part of our human DNA. The community Borsodi envisioned is small and autonomous – really a mere village of a few hundred[15]. Borsodi railed against bigness and centralization. They would be self-governing. A world of such communities would change the course of history, eliminate war and poverty, and let us get about the business of pursuing a human destiny.

The creation of the School of Living poised the question: Can we educate people to become more fully human? The roots of the idea of a school to shape and support the way we live goes at least as far back as the beginning of human civilization. That has been the leading question of humanist trailblazers for more than 2,500 years. In the 6th century BCD, the Greek Pythagoras had the idea of an extraordinary community organized around an exemplary learning institution. Plato and Aristotle followed his example with the Academy and Lyceum. We see it in the Confucian schools in China, the gurus of ancient India, the temple schools of Egypt, the Rabbinical tradition of ancient Israel, the monasteries and cathedral schools of the Middle Age that were followed by the Universities, etc. Froebel, Pestalozzi, Montessori and others created such schools. So did Alfred Korzybski. Eric Hoffer, who sought to break the chains of collectivist illusion, championed a new school for the working people that he admired, a school with aims very similar to Borsodi's vision. Many of these schools place less emphasis on community organization than Borsodi did, but they all sought to improve the overall quality of life and to develop both independence and a sense of collaboration.

But even before that, in effect, nomadic tribal groups were basically a school of living. They were all about learning the skills needed to survive, not only to hunt and fight, but also about how to form a social system that insured mutual cooperation and well-being. Into the modern era schools have served this basic purpose. Sadly, while focusing on the job of learning how to live in a vastly complex technological society, we seem to be losing knowledge of the skills needed to form community, let alone to be fully human.

The Quality Life

In *This Ugly Civilization,* Borsodi defined quality life and linked it to the homesteading lifestyle. Such a life, he wrote, starts with physical, financial, as well as personal independence.

> *"For quality-minded men and women, the economic independence which such a homestead would furnish would be of revolutionary consequence. For note this: while freedom*

[15] The human mind evolved to be comfortable with a group of 150 to 200 people – you can know everyone. This takes natural form in tribes, villages and successful organizations.

from dependence upon the factory would prove a boon to all types of men, in it lies a distinctive value for this minority of mankind. In our factory-dominated civilization it would enable them to 'sell' their talents without having to prostitute them. If the majority of our artists, writers, architects, engineers, teachers, musicians, scientists were in this way to secure the freedom to refuse to do work which outrages their tastes, life for everybody would undergo a radical change. The mere fact that business men would lose their power to dictate to the idealists of the world; that they would have to solicit the services of idealists rather than that idealists should beg them to utilize their services, would be sufficient to change a society in which emphasis is placed upon money into a society in which emphasis would be placed upon ideals."

"But it would go farther. It would furnish a better pattern of how life should be lived because it would furnish mankind a more intelligent social leadership. Our plutocracy, which today furnishes society with its culture patterns, makes accumulation seem the most desirable thing in life. It stimulates all of mankind to a reckless race for material possession on the theory that wealth is the key to happiness. An economically independent, intellectual aristocracy would very quickly demonstrate the hollowness of a life of mere acquisition."

"How can the quality-minded create such a society unless they free themselves from an economic servitude which makes them ridiculed and despised by their fellows?"

I don't think Jefferson or Emerson could have put it any more eloquently.

The second part of the School of Living program was life-long adult education. This is not remedial education for dropouts but what Borsodi called "re-education". It is a "higher" education. This was, in fact, the core of his program. Borsodi had a vision, a mission in life. Mildred summarized it nicely in the subtitle of her Borsodi biography "Reshaping Modern Culture." It was not about reform but an alternative lifestyle, a counterculture if you will. Summarized in a statement Borsodi made at a conference in New York City in 1940 (which I have called his credo):

"Believing that the full development of each human being is the supreme value, the School of Living has as its primary purpose to assist adults in their study and use of the accumulated wisdom of mankind."

"Believing that such study and use of wisdom is best facilitated by being related to the universal and perpetual living experience of human beings, the School of Living aims to assist adults in becoming aware of and the defining <u>the major problems of living</u> common to all people.

School of Living Curriculum

There were two parts to the School of Living curriculum. The first was homesteading skills. The Borsodis, as noted, had invited friends from the city to join them on weekends to learn the skills they had acquired. He had a small library of documents, many from the US Department of Agriculture (listed in the bibliography of *Flight From the City*).

Division

The School of Living was a complex organization. George Weller in an article in *Free America* reported five divisions of the School of Living at the time.:

- Homemaking. In an earlier chapter I list the publications of this division.
- Agriculture, or rather gardening: the cultivation of vegetables, orchards and raising of small farm animals from fowl to goats.

- Crafts: Workshop practices including making furniture, weaving and production of other household implements and farm products. Looms were manufactured by the School of Living with its label.
- Building: Borsodi learned to remodel and built Dogwoods and other structures. This was a natural part of homesteading life. With the Bayard Lane community, a guild, with several groups of workers, was formed to do construction.
- Small Business: Training in how to establish a personal business. This was also called "Applied Exchange."

Seminars

Borsodi loved to hold conferences and give lectures. But he also admired the seminar model, and he picked up an excellent model from St. John's College, in Annapolis, Maryland, with which Borsodi became intimately involved in a long association. St. John's was established about a year after the School of Living. St. John's president, Stringfellow Barr, was a regular visitor to the School of Living. As described elsewhere, during World War II, Borsodi drafted a plan for them to become a self-sufficient institution.

St. Johns, then and now, sought to preserve the humanistic tradition of the classical past. Students at St. John's studied the Great Books, the writings of the greatest minds down through the ages, and, rather than attend lectures they assembled in seminars, under the guidance of tutors, to discuss these texts, to critically examine them, to engage in dialog, and to form their own distinctive and distinguished characters.

Borsodi understood that there was much to be learned from the great heritage of human experience. He firmly believed that we need an institution that provides not only the basic skills required to achieve a livelihood on the land but also a deep understanding of what it means to be a human being. The objective of this institution is to promote critical intelligence, clarity, and self-reliance – the integrated personality.

Publications

The Homesteading Division produced many publications, as noted above, and we know that they had wide circulation. The *How to Economize* series sold 130,000 copies.

We also know there were newsletters and probably other documents for each Division. Unfortunately, the documentation for this period has been lost. Borsodi and friends also started the journal *Free America* focused on the topic of decentralism and increasingly, during the war years, on homesteading practices.

Two Threads

There are two major threads in our lives: Self and Society. These are two potent and troubling influences. They are seemingly mutually exclusive qualities and can cause stunning conflict. They have been the subjects of thoughtful people since at least the time we first started to record history. They are at the core of the great religions and social philosophies. Borsodi knew that we must reconcile these two forces; not diminish one in the favor of the other, but to bring them together in a powerful synthesis. This is the genesis of the School of Living.

What makes us human?

At root is an understanding of human nature. What defines our species is self-consciousness. At some point early in our lives we awaken to "I." There is only one of each of us. The world becomes subject and object.

But we are also a social species. As a species we are unique in our consciousness and we are unique among the higher animals in our capacity to bond with others. The other Eusocial[16] species are mostly ants, bees and termites; colonizing insects that have created profoundly intricate societies. They have an unprecedented ability to survive as species. They operate from instinct. Humans are different. We think.

That the human species is a part of nature is more than a cliché; it is an absolute fact. We too often impose our ideals on what Nature should be like. I think we need to get to the basics, the facts of life as Nature defines them. To start with, our species is the product of four billion years of the evolution of life on Earth. Within each cell is a master template of our being, DNA. In that coil of molecules is recorded every step of the evolution of life. When the sperm and egg join in the womb, the organism that will become one of us starts as a little bud of cells and then grows through the evolutionary stages of life. Over these billions of years life has become increasingly complex and at the apex of the tree of life is us, defined by the most complex organism of all – the human brain. With it, Nature has become aware of itself.

Most of us have some understanding of the process of evolution. *National Geographic* is full of stories about the discovery of our remote ancestors and other races, now extinct, that evolved into some stage of self-consciousness. We know that people like ourselves, both physically and neurologically, appeared at least 200,000 years ago; a mere tick of the geological clock.

What defines our species is that awareness – of self and of other things. This takes place in a newly evolved brain structure called the neo-cortex. It is in that part of our new brain that language came into existence. In that part of our brain we remember, and we imagine: We are aware of past, present and future. We are able to not only adapt to changing circumstances, we can anticipate the course of events and imagine alternative solutions[17]. I say "we," but memory and imagination are functions only an "I" can do. How we accomplish what we imagine is the "we" part.

Only humans have the capacity for abstract language. That makes us a learning species. With the invention of writing we gained an additional capacity to inscribe our experience on media that can be passed down from generation to generation[18]. Inevitably we developed libraries and schools. The core value of the School of Living is Borsodi's realization of the great power of this human quality that has not been fully developed. Indeed, our educational systems are problematic in many ways.

[16] According to biologist E. O. Wilson, of all the millions of species there are just 19 that exhibit the quality of being Eusocial.
[17] We also have extraordinary eye-hand coordination and that hand is capable of astonishing manipulation: we are makers.
[18] Written language also includes musical and mathematical notations.

Our capacity to learn

Borsodi developed a model for what he considered a true, or right, education. It is first of all focused on the individual. It is problem centered. It is integral and holistic, not specialized, and it consults the accrued wisdom of the species – all of it.

It is not learning for learning's sake. It is about how we adapt, survive, make progress, and find understanding and meaning in life. Its true function is to develop our individual capacities to the utmost so we can contribute to our community and to the progress of our species. This is a dynamic process, a process that is never in equilibrium and never should be. It's like walking a tight rope, or expressed another way in the Kath Upanishad, "the razor's edge."

The human mind is an astonishing function. As such it has a natural purpose. While it has the capacity of consciousness, memory, imagination, language, humor, etc., it has evolved for one purpose: To solve the problems of survival. It is an organ of adaptation. It comes fully awake only in the face of a problem, a threat.

It is a complex system. There are actually three brains built one upon the other that reflect the evolution of life, sometimes referred to as the reptilian, mammalian, and human brains. Awakened to threat, our response starts through the lower brain and the result, especially to threat (real or imagined), can be raw, brutal and purely animal.

Throughout our history we have struggled with the problem of the beast within us. The great religions deal with this problem. Typically, they put the solution in an otherworldly context; in other words, they see the realities of life on Earth as essentially unresolvable. Nonetheless they give us a vision of a life we define as more human.

"Religio" means rule. Religions have given us principles, laws and rules society requires to live in good order. In the field of philosophy, we have gone further into the realm of logic, the rules of reason. We have a sense of morality and ethics. Somewhere in us is encoded the concepts of dignity, nobility, refinement, and such. Wilson attributes this to our Eusocial nature, to an essential sense of community, and more, an innate altruism. This is realized through what we call humanitarian behavior. Borsodi was profoundly humanitarian.

Imagination can, however, sometimes be dangerous. Nature operates by law. The human mind does not. As the Red Queen told Alice, she could believe in six impossible things before breakfast. In short, we need a standard for objective reality. We have pursued that from the time of Socrates and Confucius and across the centuries to today[19].

Rules, or laws, can serve good or evil. Tyrants are good at making laws. As Eric Hoffer so eloquently described in *The True Believer*, finding the world more than they can cope with, masses of people frequently choose to surrender the self to the collective. The result is too often bestial.

[19] Transition Centre uses Korzybski's general semantics and Fuller's synergetics (two closely linked systems) as a standard for objective evaluation and how that comes about. Or not. An outlines of those systems, and the nature of us, can be found in my *Self-Reliance: Achieving Personal Resiliency and Independence* (link)

Borsodi didn't like rules[20]. He is eloquently descriptive but not prescriptive. His entire body of work is designed for one purpose only: To get us to ask the questions, that is, to define the problems that our brains are stirred up about. We can then consult our collective (historic) experience for insights and then formulate solutions. This is learning.

End Game

World War II brought this second phase of Borsodi's career to a closure. Following the war, he shifted into a new, higher gear. With a return to prosperity, the Bayard Lane residents decided to break up the land trust and secure their property fee simple. The School of Living continued to operate under Borsodi's direction. He built a strong core team and support network. He continued to edit *Free America* and published a School newsletter he called *The Decentralist*. He completed his St. John's proposal, worked on a draft of a book with the renowned British philosopher Aldous Huxley[21], and developed a peace plan that anticipated the United Nations.

There were also two associated enterprises formed. The first was the School of Living Institute chartered in January 1945 "to promote this new type of education" — "the scientific study of normal living in various communities." Carl Vrooman, of Bloomington, Illinois, formerly Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, was Chancellor of the Institute, and Mildred Jenson Loomis, of Brookville, Ohio, its Dean. The institute was headquartered at the Loomis Lane's End homestead (Chapter 13). Local study groups were identified in Bethlehem, Pa., Columbus, Coshocton, Cincinnati and Cleveland, Ohio.

The second associated enterprise was Bayard Lane, Inc, Publishers, set up to print books and periodicals dealing with subjects of interest to the School of Living. Herschel Papiroff was President, Frank G. Chiles, Vice President and Edward M. Borsodi, Secretary-Treasurer.

A publication from the end of the war (1946) reported that:

> *"The activities of the School fall into three main divisions: (1) Research and Publications, (2) Education, and (3) Demonstration. …. the following is a brief outline of its present educational activities.*
>
> *"The regular day at the School is divided into periods each of which is used as a basis for studying the practices of living. Every part of the day – including the rest and recreation period – thus becomes an integral element in the effort to obtain insight into the problems of living. The Seminars on the principles of living were conducted under the leadership of Mr. Borsodi afternoons and evenings. The Morning Experiment Period under the leadership of Mr. and Mrs. Toms begins with a discussion of activities and experiments planned for each day.*
>
> *"Among the projects and practices which will be the subject of experimentation, are the following: Allocation of Time; Indoor and Outdoor Chores; Nutrition; Weaving; Recreation and Recuperation; Gardening, Pruning, etc.;' Cows, Goats, Chickens, Ducks, Rabbits; Butter and Cheddar Cheese making; Freezing and Cold Storage; Preserving, Canning and Drying of Food; Economics of Home Production; Modern Laundering; Beekeeping and Pollination.*

[20] He did devise a Constitution of the First Homestead Unit at Dayton and a Homesteader Constitution to create a corporation that put the land beyond the reach of probate courts. These documents include principles and rights, not the foundation of a legal system such as the Constitution of the United States.

[21] The book was not published but Huxley referred to their common theme, and recognized Borsodi's contribution in his 1946 *Science, Liberty and Peace*.

There were twelve bulletins of its Research Division dealing with the practical activities. There was also a substantial library of perhaps 2,000 volumes.

Seminars on the Thirteen Major Problems of Living

Borsodi had begun a series of seminars across the country on his new problem-centered educational framework. A comprehensive program of seminars was being offered at the School at Suffern: "Seminars on the principles of Normal Living." There were weekend and summer seminar programs. They came in two categories: Seminars on the Thirteen Major Problems of Living and Seminars on the implementation of Normal Living. The first group included:

I and II – Definition of "Normal Living." The Normal Individual; the Normal Family; the Normal Community. Methods of establishing Norms of Living.

III – The Thirteen Major Problems of Living. The Major Aspects of Action; the Problems they create for the Individual; Ideas and Ideologies for dealing with them.

IV and V – The Psycho-Physiological Problem and Ideologies for dealing with it. The three psycho-physiological functions: Death, Birth, Living. Organization: Regimen and Therapy.

VI and VII – Occupational Problems and Ideologies. The functional aspect: spending time. The organization of time: Production; Recreation; Recuperation; (Work, Play, Rest).

VIII and IX – Possessional Problems and Ideologies. The functions of property: Poverty, Security, Liberty. The organization of ownership and trusteeship.

X – Associational Problems and Ideologies. The functions and organization of individual-to-individual relationships.

XI – Group Problems and Ideologies. Functions and organizations of individual-to-group and group-to-group relationships.

XIII – Ethical Problems and Ideologies. The problem of the consequences of action; the organization of law and manners.

VIV – Esthetic Problems and Ideologies. The function of the feeling for beauty and ugliness; the organization of skill and good taste.

XV and XVI – Educational Problems and Ideologies. Functions and organization of right education. Instinct vs. education; adult vs. juvenile education; the four fields and methods of education.

XVII – Operational Problems and Ideologies. The planning of living; the eight elements in the organization of projects and enterprises essential to normal living.

XVIII – Ontological Problems and Ideologies. The functions and organization of man's freedom and his power over nature.

XIX – Epistemological Problems and Ideologies. Truth vs. reality; the validation of action.

XX – Teleological Problems and Ideologies. What is the end or purpose to which life should be devoted?

Seminars on the implementation of Normal Living

I – Definition of Implementation and Normalization

II – Jurisdictional Problems: 1. Personal Action; 2. Group Action (Centralization); 3. De-Institutionalization (Decentralization)

III and IV – Property: Access and passion:

1. Land – Purchase or Renting; Organizing Homestead Associations; the Normalization of Land Tenure.
2. Buildings, Equipment and Other Forms of Capital – Private, Corporate, Cooperative, Government Ownership.
3. Credit – The Commercial Bank; the Credit Union; the Normalization of Banking and Credit.
4. Money – The three alternatives: Labor, Debt and Commodity Money; the Normalization of Money.
5. Public Services and Utilities – the Normalization of Special Privilege and Monopoly.

VIII to X – Occupation and Production:

1. Domestic Production vs. the Production of Monetary Income
2. The Production of Food, Clothing and other Necessaries of the Good Life
3. Recreation: Participation vs. spectator
4. Provision for Recuperation

XI and XII – Psychological and Physiological Health

1. Regimen and the Maintenance of Health
2. Therapy: Restoration of Health

XIII – Personal Association: Mores and Manners and the Normalization of Individual Rights and Duties.

XIV – Group Association: Organization and Normalization of Group Rivalry.

XV – Civic Association: Legal Coercion and its place in Normal Living.

XVI to XIX – Education.

1. The Normalization of Adult Education; the University and School of Living.
2. The Normalization of Juvenile Education: The Home; the Common School; the High School; Vocational Education; College
3. The Normalization of the Curriculum; the Education of the Perceptions, the Emotions, the Intelligence, the Will
4. The Normalization of Method; Opportunity, Example, Precept, Command

XX – Operating and Planning: The Normalization of Organization and Leadership.

The term "normalization" is used repeatedly. The objective of the School of Living program is "normal" living. Normal in this case is not the average, the ordinary; it is the optimum, the Good Life. We may interpret it in terms of self-actualization as defined by Abraham Maslow. In contrast, almost everything about our urban-industrial culture is abnormal. The only way to achieve the normal life is through education.

Transition

Borsodi, as noted, had been active in education since at least his teen years when he worked with the Georgist movement in New York City. He taught classes, made speeches and edited the newsletter for them. At Dogwoods, he invited friends from the city to learn the arts of homesteading and started a correspondence course. The Borsodis homeschooled their children. In *This Ugly Civilization* he proposed an educational program. He advocated education at Dayton. The School of Living formalized his program. It continued to evolve into and through the war and was put on a solid foundation afterwards.

Following the war, with Mildred Loomis taking over much of the responsibility for running the School of Living programs at Lane's End, Borsodi completed his *Education and Living* (1948) which became a master text, the keystone, to his system.

As we shall see, the program, the problem-centered approach to learning, the wholistic development of the person, continued to evolve, beginning in 1950, into a university experiment, then a long stay in India working with agrarian educational collaborators and the publication of *The Education of the Whole Man,* and finally *Seventeen Problems*, which rounded out his research.

But he was not done with practical work. Ahead of him also lay the work of developing his land trust system and local currency. To support these, he would eventually develop two international organizations.

Chapter 5

Prosperity and Security.

The mid-1930s were an extremely busy and highly productive time for Ralph Borsodi. In January 1933 he was invited to the Dayton Homesteading project. This represented a career change for him. He left his business as a consulting economist to devote himself completely to homesteading. He published *Flight from the City* in 1933 and a second edition in 1935. Following Dayton, he opened the School of Living in 1934. He and friends established a corporation to raise funds for land trusts and he established homesteading communities at Suffern, West Nyack and bought property elsewhere. He and friends developed a number of production divisions at the School of Living. In addition to its organizational and educational efforts, the School of Living produced a long list of publications. Borsodi joined Chauncey Stillman and Herbert Agar to start and edit *Free America* in 1937.

In 1938 Borsodi published *Prosperity and Security* and in 1939 coauthored *Agriculture in Modern Life*. This chapter will focus on those two books. In them he describes a new economic theory and its application. Borsodi introduced a new approach to economics. He observed that scientific economics, and he challenged economics as a science, ignores the largest industry in the country, and the one that offers the greatest long-term security, home and small-scaled production. It is not conventional capitalism although it advocates a free and open market. It is a decentralized market free of the strictures of government and big business. It has no use for the collectivist ideologies of Russian, German and Italy, or for that matter the New Deal.

The two books, *Prosperity and Security* and *Agriculture in Modern Life* must, in my opinion, be read together. In the latter he joined forces with two leaders of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. In that book he provided an insightful alternative to the New Deal. He didn't like what he perceived as government centralization and made no bones about it. In three chapters he stated his case and in the final section, a dialog between the three authors, he made it clear that he heard a different drummer.

It should be pointed out that Borsodi was at a personal peak at this time. The School of Living experiment was flourishing. The Great Depression was going into its tenth year. Japan was on the rampage in Asia and Europe was under the sway of tyrants. It was clear that war was imminent. New Deal centralization of government and economic planning was becoming an accepted fact. Borsodi and friends, however, as we will see below, were rebelling against centralization. They railed against the abuses of industry leading up to the Great Depression and the massive bureaucratization of American society under Roosevelt's hand. They sought not reform but an alternative, a moral and just society much along the lines proposed by Jefferson and founded upon firm American traditions.

In this chapter I will attempt to summarize Borsodi's economic theory. This should give us better clarity about his mission in life and underlying philosophy. It also gives us a more coherent and articulate formulation of the economics of the Green Revolution.

And please note that in this chapter I have quoted liberally, with and without quotation marks.

Open Letter

Prosperity and Security begins with a long open letter to a man who is seeking success in life; an ambitious young man. It probes the question: What is success? There is an element of satire in this letter. Borsodi uses it as an indictment of predatory ambition which he, and many other critics of the day, saw as a major cause of the then extended Great Depression – then going almost a decade long.

If you want to be really successful and rise to the top, he wrote, you have to have a Machiavellian economics: dog-eat-dog. You have to be ruthless. You have to be a predator. And the law allows you to exploit others so you can do that with impunity. He wrote:

> *"Wealth goes to the man who does not hesitate to use flattery, fear, fraud, and force to secure some such advantage in the competition with his fellows. Politicians, financial magnates and the heads of modern industry understand this. Most people do not."*
>
> *"This is something which you and every man ruthless enough to consider living by exploitation and predation should know.*

This is but one of four ways of obtaining the things we need and desire. Borsodi listed them:

1. The oldest, to plant and harvest things, to spin and weave them; to make them with saw, hammer, and chisel; to fashion them by your own art and craft, and then to enjoy them with your own family. This is what Borsodi called domestic production in *Flight from the City*. Producing and creating for your own use could furnish you greater emotional security and more opportunities for creative self-expression than taking what you desire from people who are too stupid or too weak to keep what they possess. Family production is a program for folk who aim at virtue and happiness, and for whom the good life is represented by home and hearth, by friends and by children, by lawns and flowers. But for you this means nothing.
2. The overwhelming majority today make something which can be sold or doing work for which you can secure pay. You can even manage your own business. But this is not the road to great wealth.
3. There are those who say the world owes them a living. They rely on the sympathy and charity of others. With the depression millions have been reduced to beggary but this state was temporary. For some with disadvantages, from children to the aged and otherwise disadvantaged, dependence is legitimate and true communities are responsive to these needs. For others, however, it is a lifestyle option. This is the life of the parasite, the dependent personality. Neither, of course have appeal to the ambitious man.
4. Exploitation and predation. Only saps work: Take what you want from those who happen to possess it for as little return as possible. Predation often does involve hard work. But it is not work in order to create wealth. It is work in order to exploit the wealth created by others.

History is a story of piracy and conquest – of predatory appropriation. Borsodi cited the monopolistic speculation of notorious business tycoons. The crimes of greed on a grand scale he considered little different than highwaymen and swindlers albeit legal. Predatory business is protected by politics and law. The government provides various instruments (trademarks, patent, license, tariff, subsidy or rebate, incorporation, etc.,) adapted to appropriating money from the public and the courts and police ensure these instruments function properly. There are legal instruments to exploit the producer (farmer), workers and the investing public.

Corporate privileges, monopolies and regulations produce predatory profits. Incorporation provides freedom from personal liabilities. Stocks and bonds, a market created for them, the stock market, allow them to harvest wealth. Ordinary people invest and when markets decline, they lose. Their hopes and dreams, the fruits of their work, their property and savings, can be stripped from them.

Borsodi cited a number of "spectacular raids" on the economy beginning in 1893 and leading to the 1929: "slaughter of investors and speculators." This had happened 14 times "during the past century." It became easier over time, less risky for the corporate barons and "the sheep are shorn and the golden fleeced to the wealth of the raiders." He named names. He cited rapacity and ruthlessness.

Borsodi described the 1929 crash, into 1930, with facts and figures. He summarized: "Our stock exchanges are organized, like the government, ostensibly for the benefit of the public, but in reality to furnish astute financiers a more convenient arena in which to prey upon the investing public." And: "In the language of Wall Street, the ruthless insiders are with happy prescience called 'wolves'; the masses of investors, 'lambs.'" Many of the wolves bit the dust as well. But the market recovers after a while and usually with some reforms. Workers can then accumulate new savings to be harvested once again.

The 1929 market collapse was an egregious exception to the promise of recovery. The government bailed out bankrupt banks and other corporations, but the Depression lingered. In the wake of the collapse, Hitler, Stalin and Mussolini mobilized the masses. Both communist and socialist were active in American politics and social reform. This, said Borsodi, poses a threat.

Economics: A Redefinition

I should reiterate that Borsodi was a consulting economist with clients on Wall Street. Until he went to Dayton he continued to commute from his homestead at Suffern to the city as needed for his work. He was an expert in retail trade, including advertising. I have described the two books he wrote as a pioneering consumer advocate. He was also an accountant who could do the numbers. His first book was an accounting handbook for small businesses. In short, he knew this business intimately.

And, as noted, Borsodi was a leader in the Georgist movement. George was credited with a new economics. His *Progress and Poverty* presented that new theory. It was predicated upon the failings of classical economic theory and practice. *Progress and Poverty* is still in print and after 140 years is considered a classic along with the works of Smith and

Ricardo or for that matter Keynes. Borsodi's *Prosperity and Security* is clearly an extension of George's thesis.

Borsodi's *This Ugly Civilization* (1929) was an indictment of a massive and predatory industrial economy. He focused more on the psychological impact of it and on the "quantity" and herd mentalities it produced. He proposed an alternative model, the quality mind. That was both philosophical and practical. But the keystone of the book is his family homesteading experiment – the productive family unit. In *Prosperity and Security*, he focused on the family unit as the ideal economic element of a just and sustainable society. He continued his critique of the predator and parasite but in terms of illustrating the qualitative difference between the life of the family on the land and other small-scale, mom and pop, economics verses the predator and the parasite. *Flight From the City* was a homesteaders handbook developed to help achieve economic security and quality-mindedness.

False Economics

There are a lot of books about economics, but, Borsodi claimed, they present a false and unrealistic picture of how human beings satisfy their needs and desires. Borsodi saw economic behavior as an individual rather than a national phenomenon. The economy had shifted from farm and family to the *Wealth of Nations*. It became a political economy – a byproduct of nationalism. One of the fallacies of this model is that it is not universal: it applies only to developed countries. Indeed, it applies to only part of them; the industrial side.

The world-wide depression, poverty and widespread economic struggles, demonstrate the failure of the prevailing philosophy of competition and liberalism. What should one do? He listed a large variety of "solutions?" We have to think and choose.

The highest form of production, Borsodi insisted, is not mass-production but the creative arts and crafts, still almost wholly individual. Our desires and appetites are personal. Our social and gregarious activities are founded on the virtues of sympathy, loyalty, fraternity and patriotism. At the high end of the scale are individual or spiritual activities expressed in scientific work and philosophical thought, ethically in the development of character and esthetically in the creative arts and in literature, poetry, painting, sculpture and every field of self-expression from the humblest to the finest. These are the products of the creative individual.

Borsodi set out to prove a number of assertions:

- That the analysis of man's economic activities in terms of a national political unit is unreal and unscientific.
- That production and acquisition of things we need and desire, "Is an individual, family and cooperative activity rather than a national process."
- Enormous numbers of individuals acquire what they need or desire without producing anything.
- The materialistic interpretation of economic behavior is as false as is the interpretation of economic behavior in terms of "economic" man. There are few

analogies in mathematics and almost none in the physical science upon which economics is based.

- There are four universal methods for human beings to obtain what they want: family, personal or domestic production, production for the market or monetary production, predatory and exploitive acquisition and acquisition through dependency and parasitism.
- The choice between large- and small-scale production is determined by people's beliefs regarding the relative costs.
- There are at least five methods by which people divide what they obtain among themselves: according to need, according to sympathy, according to art, according to justice and according to greed.
- There are four "psycho-economic" laws: the law of authority, the law of equality, the law of personality and the law of change.
- And four economic principles: the principle of justice, the principle of obligation, the principle of loyalty, and the principle of self-defense.
- The problem is not merely that of prosperity (standard of living) but also of security – a mental rather than material concept.
- Economic progress is founded on technology – to the additions made to the accumulated knowledge of mankind – "but no amount of progress in strictly economic techniques will of itself ever lessen man's oppressive feelings of insecurity, of injustice and of poverty, but on the contrary, that progress may actually increase and intensity them."
- Changes in the forms of economic institutions may merely alter the appearance of economic problems without actually ending them.
- It takes a balance between small and large-scaled production. Excessive small-scale production results in rural primitiveness; excessive large-scale production results in metropolitan degeneracy. There must be a fair exchange between the two scales of production – not exploitive or parasitical.
- Finally, there are only two basic techniques available for establishing and maintaining these balances – the authoritarian technique (which usually involves the use of political power), and the educational (which relies upon the development, training and leadership of men, individual by individual and group by group).

The foundation of this theory is that small-scale production is actually more efficient with regard to approximately two-thirds of the things which people consume. Thus: "The fundamental economic assumptions of present-day radicals and conservatives, capitalists and communists, democrats and fascists, seem to me to be so false" that he said he had been led to examine afresh the accepted approach to the study of the economic activities of mankind.

The most important of these enterprises is the family; usually related to one another by marriage or ties of blood, pooling and sharing in some degree their incomes, and dividing what they purchase or acquire or produce on their farms and in their homes among their members according to their respective needs and requirements. It is to that end that Borsodi made this effort to establish a new economic philosophy.

Economic Transactions

Adam Smith based his economics on the idea of trade rather than the more fundamental idea of satisfying our needs and desires. It is really about how we go about acquiring what we need. And the manner in which we optimize this.

Borsodi summarized the four means of satisfying wants:

1. Make what they want for themselves
2. Trade what they earned or produced
3. Take what they want from others
4. Get what they want from charity, beggary or by gift.

Over the course of time, the functions of an economic enterprise (including tribes) has not changed. It is universal. "The most important characteristics of economic enterprises are:

1. They are relatively permanent economic establishments initiated and owned or controlled by individuals or groups of individuals as instruments for the satisfaction of their wants;
2. They are the instruments through which the money, or goods and property, obtained through the enterprise, are apportioned or divided among those who are considered to have some claim upon it;
3. They involve the use of property – they involve capital investments – though those who furnish the capital in different types of enterprises may be related to on another in different ways;
4. They involve the risk of loss of the capital and the labor invested in them, though the burden of the risks may be differently distributed in different types of enterprises.

In 1929 there were about 40,000,000 economic enterprises of various kinds. In broad terms Borsodi listed five classifications of economic enterprises:

1. Personal and Family Enterprises
2. Corporate and Privileged Enterprises
3. Social Enterprises
4. Government Enterprises
5. Criminal Enterprises.

Personal and family enterprises consist of: Salary and wage-earning families (large majority); personal enterprises including farms, mercantile business, professions and other (significant); parasitic and dependent families and wealthy families. About half of the people belonging to family enterprises also engage in outside "gainful employment." This category represented 36,462,000 of the total of 37,487,587 economic enterprises on the list.

There were a lot of family-owned businesses. A lot of people in trades. A goodly number of artists, authors, architects, physicians and surgeons, dentist, trained nurses, lawyers, engineers, chemist and other professional and semi-profession workers who were not salaried employees but who practiced independently. There was something like 36,800,000 so supported in 1929.

The average number of persons supported by family enterprises was 4.1 in 1929, with an average of 1.6 engaged in earning money. About half of these enterprises owned land and houses, and 6,288,648 owned farms. The value of the goods and services produced by family enterprises was almost equal to the net value of all the manufactured goods produced by industries. Borsodi also recognized the economic contributed of 30,000,000 women homemakers. A lot of these goods were in fact produced for home consumption. The bulk of Americans then still secure their living by producing and earning it.

Borsodi provided three tests of the "value" of multiple and indirect production vs. singular and direct production:

1. Does it result in an increase in self-expression, creativity?
2. Does it result in an increase in injustice?
3. Economically, does it result in increased production of goods and services; in efficiency?

The first is domestic production. It is nonmonetary.

In 1929 some 60% of the total population were producers, evenly divided between monetary and non-monetary production. Shaving (which cost 20 cents at a barber shop) and cooking a meal are non-monetary production. Economics does not measure the value of things men do such as making their own repairs, shaving, mowing lawns, gardening, etc. – DIY.

It appears that we have become increasingly monetary. We pay for things we used to do for ourselves. Entertainment exemplifies this trend. Homemakers were a large part of the non-monetary production. In the home, children have value that is not measured by economists. That too has been commercialized.

Borsodi tabulated a total of $154, 601,000,000 in goods and services in 1929. He concluded that the values of all goods and services produced is about 30% greater than usually estimated by economist who ignore personal and family production. That 30% is what is being produced in homes. These include cleaning and washing, cooking and baking, canning and preserving, garden related, sewing and dressmaking, bearing, nursing and raising babies, teaching children and entertainment. And yes, all of these services can be purchased elsewhere. Homemaking is a 60-70 hour per week job (or more). Economist ignore this.

There are four scales of production: family production, custom production, factory production and social production. Custom production is trades and crafts, such as tailor and seamstress. Social production includes things like highways, postal services, schools, police departments and other social services. Production is only one of six functions which are constant to every enterprise: management, production, financing, purchasing, marketing and accounting.

Social and political systems are different things. Systems of production yet another thing. They overlap each other but there is no absolute correspondence between the three. The resulting system, where they overlap, may or may not work well. History has

demonstrated that man can adapt to any system no matter how unjust, fantastic, and inefficient. There is no one best system of production.

Borsodi reported that: "Experiments with approximately two-thirds of the products which the average American family consumes, which have been made on the Borsodi homestead for the past decade, have raised serious doubts in my mind about the economy of mass production of goods which do not fall into the category of industrial machinery and similar "durable" goods. He made an example of home producing flour. Powered equipment, he noted, makes home production far more efficient. Borsodi originated appropriate technology.

While factories may be efficient, the cost of distribution increases. Distribution requires an elaborate marketing and transportation system. Between 1870 and 1932, the cost of production was reduced less than one-quarter while the cost of distribution increased to 57%. Transportation represented another 11%. And now more than half of the population work in non-productive commercial activates.

Nearly half of what is produced (monetary income) is channeled off in the form of rent, interest and profits. Borsodi called these "tolls." Interest absorbed nearly 10%; profits another 20%. These moneys go to people who do not contribute to production.

In direct barter, both participants to a transaction immediately satisfy their desires. Money postpones the satisfaction of immediate desires. The majority of money is token, not real, a form of debt. It is a promissory note, not tangible property or real wealth. It is not a medium of exchange.

The Laws of Economics

The material world remains one system with a single set of laws. But no such good fortune seems to prevail in the realm of economics. No laws exist for the social world: "The world with which we are confronted is a chaos of designs, endlessly patched and re-patched by designing statemen, churchmen, and scientist, all of them desperately and pathetically hoping that sooner or later some of them would succeed in correcting the defects of its original design."

Economics doesn't explain what humans do but is merely a rationalization of exchange. It's not one system but 20 or more, often overlapping, systems of acquisition and division – an endless number of possible combinations. Making rules does not make them fact. Economics is based on assumptions – ludicrously inaccurate description of what actually takes place. They assume, falsely, that human behavior is as predictable as molecular behavior. Transactions are rather modified by individual peculiarities, characteristics and personalities. There are also religious, ethical and esthetic ideals; non-economic behaviors. Borsodi's approach is the actions of individuals, not mass behavior.

Borsodi's three aspects of economic transaction:

1. The actions preliminary to a transaction – the negotiations of the parties.
2. The execution of the transaction.
3. The division of the produce or proceeds of the transactions.

To achieve justice, the individual must be both politically and economically free; feel no arbitrary constraints, such as law and government. Compelled to accept wages makes freedom a mockery. Ditto mortgages.

Economics considers only four fundamental factors — Land, labor, capital, and enterprise produce wealth. This is a simplification, a caricature. Smith believed there were three: land, labor and capital. George that there were only two – land and labor.

In reality there are at least five groups of factors: personal, social, physical, political and functional, and at least 21 distinct factors (not just four) which affect the transactions and enterprises upon which men enter in order to obtain what they want:

1. The Personal Factors
    a. Individual capability
    b. Individual character
    c. Individual wants
2. The Social Factors
    a. The standard of living
    b. The standard of behavior
    c. The standard of value
    d. The technical standard
3. The Physical Factors
    a. Human beings
    b. Consumption goods
    c. Production goods
    d. Land
4. The Political Factors
    a. Taxation
    b. Land law
    c. Property law
    d. Contract law
5. The Functional Factors
    a. Management
    b. Production
    c. Accounting
    d. Purchasing
    e. Marketing

These factors have not changed over time and are not dependent on any system. They are, however, all interdependent – what affects one, affects all. They work together in an almost infinite variety of ways.

"Division" describes the part of the transaction each individual acquires. There are five divisions:

1. Divisions according to the needs of the persons involved. This is found in a family.
2. According to sympathy – willing to share what you have more of. Hospitality.
3. According to art - seeking beauty, truth and goodness. Arts and science.

4. According to justice, to give each value equivalent to their contribution.
5. According to greed.

Borsodi discussed each of these in greater detail. Theoretically, consumers are economic sovereigns. But they buy like sheep. Justice requires freedom of participation. Communist believe it can be done by compulsion. Sympathy is impersonal. It is reciprocal. It is not hypocrisy or parasitism.

Borsodi's four Principles for Economic Behavior:

1. The principle which ought to govern the basis upon which individuals are equally free to enter or to refuse to enter into a transaction.
2. The principle (of economic obligation) which ought to govern the basis upon which the stronger, the superior, the more intelligent, experienced, efficient and enterprising individuals when they enter into transactions with those who are inferior and weaker and less intelligent, experienced, efficient and enterprising than themselves.
3. The principle (of loyalty) which ought to govern inferior individuals when they enter into the type of transactions described immediately above; with those superior to themselves.
4. The principle (of economic self-defense) which ought to be observed by society in general – which ought to be observed in the customs, codes and laws which people accept or which their representatives enact, and which should guide the public officials who exercise political and economic power in enforcing or in making possible the observance of the first three principles.

The second principle, of obligation of the superior, insures mutually beneficial enterprises, protects the inferior from the consequences of their own weakness of character and capacity, and educate them for a status of economic equality and freedom by strengthening their characters and improving their capacities. Strength and superiority confer rights, but what the strong and superior should recognize is that they also impose obligations.

Regarding point number 3, the inferior should take into account their own limitations and cooperate loyally with their superiors in every endeavor which actually enhances the welfare of both. Loyalty must be won by the superior, not just given by the inferior. There is nothing menial about this relationship. It is simply a division of labor.

Regarding point number 4, we see a response to the relationship with predators and parasites.

Classical economics is based purely on quantity. This applies to both capitalistic and communistic economics. It is all about the production of wealth – a monstrous proposition. It involves not merely a suicidal exploitation of the physical resources of the earth, but it also involves a debasement of the spiritual resources of mankind.

These four principles represent an integration of the physical and the spiritual because they are based upon a truer statement of the economic laws which actually govern the production and acquisition of goods and the services which people need and desire. The basic principle involved is the satisfaction of wants. We have learned to transform the

world, if not ourselves – or how to live in this transformed world. There must not be a divorce between the material and moral life of the individual.

Laws, institutions, and practices effecting economic life must be based upon the innate need of actual human beings, not only for prosperity and security, but for everything else which enters into life. This is not a demand which can be dismissed as utopian and visionary. On the contrary, it is an objective much more realistic than the so-called materialistic objectives of accepted economics. The gravest mistake, the greatest error, the largest departure from canons of scientific truth in so called economic science is its failure to recognize that people are human beings as well as wealth-producing animals.

Individually owned productive property makes people feel secure primarily because they know that they themselves will be able to produce what they need in the future. Owning property makes people feel free and independent.

The simple truth is that the number of individuals equipped by character and capacity for ownership and administration of property is limited; people must be prepared and educated for it; proprietorship cannot be trust upon them – they will be unable to keep it.

All the wealth of 1929 was produced by 60% of the population – family production and production for exchange. But they were not able to retain more than 25% of it. Corporations got the rest. About 56% of the wealth of the country is personally owned. Much of it that figurative. In reality it is more like ¼. Three-quarters is owned by plutocracy and bureaucracy.

Law

Government laws promote and protect exploitation. These laws serve to protect the government, protect property and protect the person. A partnership, however, exists between governments and predators who support it. Corporate privilege benefits.

What is law? Demosthenes described the law: "to ascertain what is just, honorable and expedient; and when that is discovered to proclaim it as a general ordnance, equal and impartial to all." Law "is a gift of heaven, the sentiment of wise men, the correction of every offense and the general compact of the state; to live in conformity with which is the duty of every individual in society."

Law has been perverted to the needs of the rich and powerful. Laws have become the product not of the wise but of the ambitious, their greed, their cunning, their vanity and their passions. It becomes unjust, dishonorable and inexpedient.

Blackstone, in 1765, said laws are different from personal rules in these respects: Law is permanent, uniform and universal; a rule known or made known to the people who are to obey it; authorized by the supreme power of the state, and commands what is right and prohibits what is wrong. But these rules are generally ignored by politicians, judges and lawyers. It serves those in authority.

Money, wealth, does not provide a real sense of security for those who have it. Security is a psychic necessity. The less secure the more desperate and ruthlessly will they

struggle to keep or create institutions which they believe will make them secure. Such often are the rich.

In primitive society, the feeling of individual security has its basis in the freedom of access to natural resources. In modern economic societies, there is only one way of recreating this sense of individual security – the individual possession of productive property.

It has been an error of economist to assume that production on a small scale is less efficient than industry. The small-scale producer has however been heavily taxed. Only when we abandon the habit of depreciating everything that is individual and small and of overpraising everything which is collective and big, will men begin to build such a measure of prosperity and security as is possible in the real-world peopled with such human beings as exist in it.

Giant farms, giant power and giant factories have proved a snare and delusion. The rank and file of people should be taught to distinguish between what can be produced efficiency by industrialism, and what can be best produced by small, local enterprises. They should cease permitting themselves to be fooled by collectivists of various kinds – industrialists, finance-capitalist, New Dealers, socialist, technocrats, communists, fascists – into further subsidizing of big government, big cities and big industry. The many social, economic and political units – owned and controlled by individuals, families and neighborhood groups – should cease sacrificing, not only their prosperity and security, but their very existence in order that a few big units, or one big government unit, should be able to operate on a scale large enough to appear efficient. Industrialism, urbanism and nationalism have failed to provide a solution of the economic problem of human beings for whom they are supposed to have come into existence. The time has come to recognize this truth.

If we would solve, not the problems of our inflated and centralized social, political and economic institutions, but the central problem of prosperity and security for human beings like you and me, the time has come for us to test everything having to do with economics by the criterion of its effects upon what is small but human.

From here we move to what may be considered a companion book to *Prosperity and Security*, published the following year (1939), *Agriculture in Modern Life*.

Agriculture in Modern Life

Agriculture and Modern Life originated in the spring of 1938 at Northwestern University at a (second) conference on distributive society and the possibilities of decentralization. Much of the material in this book was presented then by O. E. Baker, Ralph Borsodi and M. L. Wilson. The material, the editor wrote, was of great and unique importance to all those who love America. Borsodi's influence in making articulate the ideal of family self-sufficiency and in putting it to a working test was acknowledged.

Part I: Our Rural People, by O. E. Baker

The bulk of *Agriculture and Modern Life* was written by O. E. Baker. I've taken the liberty of profiling Baker's career in some detail from a Social Network and Archival Context (SNAC, a free online resource) page because I find his credential impressive.

Oliver Edwin Baker (1883-1949) was an agricultural geographer and population expert and an analyst for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. He was an authority on agricultural land utilization. Baker was born in 1883 in Tifflin, Ohio (population then about 10,000). His father was a merchant and mother a former teacher who taught her son. He graduated at age nineteen from Heidelberg College in Tifflin with a major in history and mathematics and the following year a master's degree in philosophy and sociology. He was granted a master's in political science at Columbia University, studied forestry at Yale (1907-1908) and agriculture at the University of Wisconsin (1908-1912). At Wisconsin he co-authored an essay on the climate of Wisconsin and its effects on agriculture, and he spent his summers with the Wisconsin Soil Survey. Baker joined the United States Department of Agriculture in 1912. He subsequently returned to the University of Wisconsin where he earned a Ph.D. in economics in 1921 with a dissertation on land utilization.

> *"In 1922 Baker was invited to join the Department of Agriculture's new Bureau of Agricultural Economics. His "Agricultural Regions of North America" was published in several parts between 1926 and 1933 in Economic Geography, for which he also served as associate editor for several years. He evidently often amazed his students by citing statistics on any of the 300 counties in the United States. Among his other publications during this period was an essay on agriculture in China that appeared in Foreign Affairs (1928). Baker was vice president of the Association of American Geographers in 1824 and president in 1932. In the late 1920s he also belonged to a National Research Council's committee charged with the study of pioneer belts. From 1923 to 1927 Baker taught part-time in the newly established geography department at Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts. In 1937 the University of Göttingen awarded him an honorary degree.*
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> *"Baker's research in population problems stemmed from his interest in what he saw as the most valuable farm product, outstanding citizens. He encouraged and participated in several surveys of rural youth, and, based on his recognition that many rural people live in unsatisfactory conditions, he devoted much energy to improving their circumstances.*
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> *"Baker was deeply concerned about the declining U.S. birthrate, especially among urban people, which he predicted would have devastating consequences for the entire nation. He was a strong advocate of a "rurban" lifestyle that would combine urban employment with suburban living and part-time farming. This, he believed, would help preserve the rural values he so admired, including the "family ideal," and "the worth of the human soul, patriotism, the dignity of labor, the necessity of sacrifice, and the widespread distribution in the ownership of property". Baker also believed that a "rurban" society would help improve land-use practices and increase the birthrate. He called for farm ownership over many generations, with one dwelling reserved for the older couple and one for the younger. Baker and his wife Alice Hargrave Crew, whom he married in 1925, practiced what he preached. The couple raised four children on a suburban property where they grew a garden and raised cows and chickens. Baker eventually bought a farm in Virginia with the intention of leaving it to his son.*
>
> *"In 1942 Baker joined the faculty of the University of Maryland. Over the next seven years, Baker established what became one of the foremost geography departments in the country. He retired as chairman in 1949 in order to focus on his research, especially in*

connection to the Atlas of World Resources and the China Atlas. He died later that year in his home in College Park, Maryland.

Just the Fact, Please

Like Borsodi, Baker, had a keenly analytic mind. Unlike Borsodi he had an extensive academic education. Both were economist with an easy command of numbers and statistics. Nearly two-thirds of this book, his contribution, is packed with details, charts, maps and analysis. His basic philosophy was, as we will see, different than Borsodi. His approach was academic, and his career was bureaucratic. He was a player in the New Deal. His basic philosophy I would define as Progressive – focused on social progress. Borsodi's was more revolutionary and you could say reactionary.

In this book, Baker made two major points – the problem of rural decline, and why and how we need to correct it. The facts came from long ago, so we need not dwell on them more than briefly. But they do describe a turning point in America history, and they provide a scenario for conditions that may now lay before us. They describe how our basic America values were affected. Now as then, not a few thoughtful people are wondering about how economic forces shape our lives – for better or worse. The response then was appropriate for the day. It was an expression of a strong movement in the country. The New Agrarians, of which the three were, to various degrees, involved, made a case for a better life, a middle way. It should be made clear that this book has been written to address those interests.

The Problem

Baker, as noted, was deeply concerned about the declining U.S. birthrate. Baker's thesis was that population growth in the US was then in fact almost flat and that if this trend continued, there would be a decline in population. A number of cities were in fact losing population. This was a national cause of alarm, both politically and economically. Rural society was still seen as a more fertile environment.

William Beveridge, London School of Economics, wrote: "The fall of the birth rate in Britain, Europe, America, Australia, wherever the European races have spread, remains one of the most important events of the past century. With all that lies behind it and all it may portend; I am inclined to reckon it a turning point in human history. [As it appears to have been a factor with Rome.]

The root cause was the great advances of science and technology, of industrialization and urbanization and of the political and economy system that had evolved to support a commercial society. Farmers were disadvantaged by this system. As they were made to serve the markets, they became a small cog in the wheel of commerce. They had little political power. Wealth, like food and fiber, flowed from the land to the city. And so did many farm youth in search of the better life. The impact of science, invention, and mechanical power on agriculture was a gradual but transformative process.

Baker tried to increase popular awareness of the contributions of farm families to the nation's welfare. If the problem was population, the farm was a solution. Farm families continued to have a number of children. This, he believed, would help preserve the rural values he so admired, including the "family ideal, … the worth of the human soul,

patriotism, the dignity of labor, the necessity of sacrifice, and the widespread distribution in the ownership of property."

As the capacity to produce children was diminished, so too was the future of the country. But there were other major problems behind the flight to the city. The first was the impact economic system on farm equity. The second was the effect of exploitation of the land. These trends, of which Baker was a leading expert, disturbed him. He believed that the future of the nation, lies largely in the hands of rural people, a return to a more familistic civilization.

Prior to the Civil War, US population doubled every quarter century. People moved into the frontiers. After the Civil War people turned more and more toward cities. But the period of expansion, exploitation and speculation was apparently approaching an end and people were seeking economic security and stability. As a result of the Great Depression, however, one-third presently were "ill-housed, ill-clad, and ill-nourished."

Most people a century ago were part-time farmers. They were also carpenters, masons, shoemakers' merchants, teachers, ministers, doctors, lawyers. Employment in trade and commerce more than doubled between 1880 and 1930. Clerical employment dramatically increased. In 1870 three-quarters of the population was employed in basic production. By 1930 it was a little more than half.

In 1929, half the farmers produce 89% of all commercial production. Between 1910 and 1920, one-quarter of cropland was needed to grow the feed needed by horses and mules on farms and in cities. With increasing mechanization, by 1935 it less than one-sixth.

Internal combustion had come to the city and the farm. Farmers went into debt buying powered farm machinery. Mechanization had a serious impact on land utilization. With the mechanization of agriculture in the US, grasslands were transformed into grainlands. As internal combustion replaced draft animals on the farm and in the cities, 40,000,000 acres of crop land required to feed horses and mules was then used for meat and milk animals mostly. Building of railroads and the invention of well-drilling apparatus, steel plows, grain seeding and harvesting machinery. There was consider change in diet – drawing from distant sources. Refrigeration and canning replaced the daily market with supermarkets.

Also at issue was farm ownership which was on the decline. A growing share of farms were cultivated by tenants. There was a dramatic increase in farms operated under lease (tenants) from 1910 to 1935. In 1880 the equity of farm operations in the US as about 62%. By 1935, 39%. Farms go out of private ownership when sons do not take over the farming. They go deeply into debt when a farm is taken over by one son who must mortgage it to pay the others their share. Debt per acre of farm real estate more than doubled between 1910 and 1920. By 1935 farm debt roughly equaled farm income. Out migration impoverishes rural areas.

Poorer farms lack capital, and sometimes the intelligence and persistence, to carry out the recommendations of the extension agents. Dependence upon the cities for financial credit, for standards of living, styles of behavior, attitudes and ideals, is a dangerous thing for farming people. To the extent that they accept the urban culture, they, too, will perish – not the present individuals, but their children will slowly cease to be. They must become

masters of their own financial fate. And captains of their own souls culturally. They must do this soon.

Crop production per acre had been declining for 20 years. Exploitation of natural resources, sand and minerals, transformed a once fertile continent. Loss of soil fertility – nitrogen and organic matter – resulted in soil erosion with 100,000,000 acres almost beyond reclamation. Surface soils of the country are being depleted at the rate of about five percent a decade and since settlement, depletion was of the magnitude of 20%. More than 50,000,000 acres of land formerly cultivated have been rendered essentially incapable of cultivation by gullying and other forms of soil removal. An additional 50,000,000 acres had been subject to severe erosion. About 100,000,000 were moderately eroded and another 100,000,000 slightly eroded. The last two groups can still be cultivated. There were 2 ½ cultivated acres per person in the US but due to population and land exploitation, that number dropped steadily.

The wealth of the land concentrated in few hands. It was being exploited ruthlessly. There was already a realization of the potential for depletion of natural gas, oil, the richest coal seams, of copper and iron deposits, silver and gold.

Rescue for Human Society: The Native Values of Rural Life

The destiny of the nation, indeed of modern civilization, lies primarily in the hands of rural people, especial of the mothers as they teach their children by precept and example, wrote Baker. He had a caution, however: only if they can recover their land and faith in themselves.

Declining population represents a maladjustment between the people and the environment. There is a cultural penalty, to wit:

- It is natural for man to own property, particularly the means of livelihood for himself and his family. Such ownership contributes not only a sense of economic security, but also a sense of dignity and responsibility. It is dangerous for a nation to develop attitudes and institutions that deny a feeling of dignity to a large proportion of its citizens.
- Private ownership of land is the great bulwark of freedom, of democracy, and of scientific progress.
- Economic security is essential to the raising of children. It should encourage fertility. That comes from the ownership of productive property; not socialism.
- The most significant characteristic of modern civilization is the sacrifice of the future for the present, and all the power of science has been prostituted to this purpose. There is a divorce between economics and ethics. Economics may become an instrument of oppression rather than of progress.

Baker described five economic systems: Familistic (characteristic of agriculture), individualistic (characteristic of independent artisans, small tradesmen and certain professions), capitalistic (mostly corporative with stockholders, salaried mangers, manufacturing and large commercial institutes), cooperative (in which stock is owned by contributing members, each with an equal potential voice in management, in buying and selling of farm products and short-time loans), and socialistic.

The first two involve ownership of land, the first productive, the second more consumption. In the first, the family is the basic economic unit.

The capitalistic system tends towards concentration of wealth, striving to maintain or raise the "standard of living," driven by profit motive, quick to accept advances in science and invention, measures success in terms of material goods, and stimulated by advertising.

Baker's major objectives included a slow and steady increase in population, efficient production and distribution of goods, and a fair distribution of national income. He added, that only the sense of economic security can make men wholly free, a freedom essential to the preservation of democracy, the progress of science and the development of personality. It relies on private ownership of property. A wage earner cannot differ with his employer.

The first objective is to strengthen the familistic system. This may require a partial abandonment of the prevalent materialistic philosophy of life, especially monetary measures of success. Agriculture appears to be the only major occupation that supports the familistic systems. It may be only part-time agriculture. The farm is the native habitat of the family.

Farmers and farm women talk about what they produce. City dwellers seem unwilling to do so. They talk about what they consume, of new cars, of new cloths and bridge parties. The former seems proud of their work but not the latter – they merely make a living. Rural people enjoy their health and long lives. Their work is part of their life.

The Catholic Church (National Catholic Rural Life Conference, circa 1937), Baker noted, supports agriculture as the central institution of Christianity, of civilization, of the family. There is a special kinship with the cultivators of the soil – the breathing of a rural atmosphere, which is spiritually healthy. The family and the farm *are* a medium of education – the child learns by doing. The family transfers skills and culture from generation to generation. Schools prepare children for urban jobs and economic dependency. Government programs are increasingly taking over support of the needy and disadvantaged in cities. Rural societies take care of their own.

Baker stated: "I place my hope, therefore, for the survival of our civilization, constantly altered by progress in human achievement, in science, universal education, the cooperative economic system, the rural family and the Christian faith, especially its emphasis on the infinite worth of the human soul."

Baker noted that low income people on farms are usually better fed than those in the cities. Home production tends to improve diets because it helps even very low-income families to obtain generous supplies of eggs, milk, butter and green-colored vegetables – foods so important for their mineral elements and vitamins. The quality was better and the caloric content much higher (half again) for rural people at any given level of spending on food. He provided a list of foods consumed by farm families. He observed that people living on farms ranked highest in having good diets and lowest in rate of illness. Rural children are a part of the family economy, not just a cost."

Baker cited John Ruskin: "There is no wealth but life." The farmer deals with life. The farmer is constantly in touch with this everlasting life: Seasons, timeless generations. Each spring, life renews. A philosophy arises from contact with the organic world. There is

a natural practice of thrift. It takes diligence, hard work and honesty to produce. The gentle and ennobling influences touch us continually in our family life.

Unless the farming people recover the ownership of the land and agriculture is recognized as an occupation affording opportunity, many of the more ambitious and better educated youth will continue to seek urban employment, and the rural areas will tend to be depleted of people possessing capacity for leadership and high intelligence.

To recover and retain the ownership of the land will require that farm people turn their faces from the over-commercialized, urban capitalistic system and turn toward the familistic and cooperative economic system. The high degree of independence must extend beyond the food supply. It requires reeducation to keep children on the farm. A different philosophy of life is fundamental; a familistic philosophy, a new, yet very old set of values. It requires rural leadership. Their task will be extremely difficult, and competent persons are as yet very few. The need is urgent.

Whether the rural people will be able to lead the nation toward a more stable and permanent civilization depends primarily upon whether they can retain the 'native values of rural life' and recover the ownership of the land. This direction depends on the leaders in agriculture, especially agricultural colleges.

The Conservation of Human Resources.

Industrial decentralization is a good idea. Rural electrification an advantage. Nearly one-third of farmers also have paid jobs not connected to the farm they operate. Manufacturing in villages, smaller towns and open country was 26.8% in 1899 and 27% in 1933. Closer markets reduce cost of distribution of farm products. Farm youth could find nearby employment.

Baker described the Scandinavian Cooperative movement and Denmark folk schools which cultivate support for the cooperative movement. They are privately owned though receive small state subsidies.

Another example was Sweden's consumers' cooperative, the Konsum – a network of fine stores selling below private competitors and paying dividends to members. It handled 10 – 15% of the trade in the country. It sold 60-70% of farm products and bought feed and fertilizer for members. He also described a rural home industry in Sweden to supplement farm income. Small factories and industries from garage shops to up to 50 workers made screws, curtain rods, wire fencing, other small metal items, linens, novelties made of wood and iron, pottery and glassware, etc. These operate mostly during winter months. There were coops to purchase materials.

Another example was the German Family Farm movement. It sought not only the perpetual fertility of the soil but the integrity of the family. These were "peasant farms," many occupied by families for 400 – 500 years – one since the 11th century. These farmers were proud of their ancestors, proud to be a farmer, and had a sense of superiority over city people. Houses were built to last by a grandfather or great-grandfather. Most had electric lighting. Typically, they had 40 – 100 acres but produced as much as American farms of 100 – 200 acres. Investments went solely into the land. No soil erosion. While there were fewer torrential rains in Germany, there was also careful soil management. Poor soil

management was considered an insult to ancestors. As the farm is passed on, the aging parents remain in the house. Each generation climbs from the shoulders of the preceding generation and wealth and culture accumulate, instead of being dissipated by migration to the cities.

> Baker reiterated that the term "rurban" is a merger of rural and urban – decentralization of industry and intermingling of rural and urban life which he noted was already occurring in New England where most farms have telephones, electric light and water piped into the house. One-half to one-third then had indoor bathrooms. These small farms were highly productive. There was an absence of conspicuous consumption. There was less tendency in this direction in the south and mid-west where youth moved to the cities in greater numbers. **Baker's Suggestions**
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> - In the US it may be necessary to incorporate the farm to preserve generational integrity.
> - The extension service can do much to promote this ownership of property. 4-H is a potential for developing rural leadership. Encourage parents to take in sons and daughters as partners to operate the farm. Establish new farm enterprises such as poultry and dairying.
> - Baker gave favorable notice to Mormons and Amish farming and community.
> - Develop the role of women in the rural economy. And reducing household consumption of trinkets and luxuries and frauds. Processing their own food stuffs. Buy with knowledge and wisdom.
> - Reduce debt. Interest paid by farmers to non-farmers amounts to some $400,000,000 per year.
> - Electric light cheers the home and power lessens labor.
> - Rural values: First, the family ideal, which includes the reproduction of the race, the education of the child and the transmission of wealth and culture from generation to generation.
> - The recognition of the divine in man, of the worth of the human soul; or, as expressed in part by Jefferson, the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The concept of the infinite worth of the human soul is a priceless contribution of Christianity to the progress of civilization. In my opinion [he said] it laid the foundation for the growth of freedom, democracy and science.
> - The dignity of labor which functions not only in the production of commodities but also in the development of personality. This also is a doctrine of the Christian church.

M. L. Wilson

From Wikipedia we learn that Milburn Lincoln Wilson (October 23, 1885 – October 1969) was an Undersecretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) under Presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt (New Deal) and Harry S. Truman (Fair Deal). He made major contributions to US federal agricultural policies. He also directed the Subsistence Homesteads Division of the U.S. Department of the Interior(during which he met Ralph Borsodi) before it was transferred to the Resettlement Administration. From SNAC we learn:

Milburn Lincoln Wilson was born in Atlantic, Iowa, on 23 Oct. 1885. He received a B.S.A. from Iowa State College, Ames, in 1907 and his M.S. in agricultural economics and rural sociology from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, in 1920. He began his career as a farmer in 1907. He served as Assistant State Agronomist at Montana State College, Bozeman (1910-1912); County Agent in Custer County, Mont. (1912-1914); Montana State Extension Agent Leader (1914-1922); and as an extension agricultural economist at Montana State College (1922-1924). Between 1924 and 1926 he took charge of the U.S.D.A. division of farm management and cost accounting. During his stint as professor and head of the Dept. of Agricultural Economics at Montana State College (1926-1933), he provided consultation on large-scale wheat farming in the U.S.S.R. From 16 May to 1 Sept. 1933, Wilson served as the Chief Wheat Production Secretary in the Agricultural Adjustment Administration and then moved on to the directorship of the Division of Subsistence Homesteads in the Dept. of the Interior until 30 June 1934. In 1934, Wilson was appointed the Assistant Secretary of Agriculture and in 1937 the Undersecretary of Agriculture until 1 Feb. 1940 when he became the Director of Extension Work at U.S.D.A. While director, he also filled in as the Chief of Nutrition Programs and in the Production and Marketing Administration between 1943 and 1949. He was a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Farm Economic Association (president, 1925), Epsilon Sigma Phi, Phi Kappa Phi, and Alpha Zeta. He was also a Unitarian and belonged to the Cosmos Club. His writings include Farm Relief and the Domestic Allotment Plan (1933) and Democracy Has Roots (1939). Married on 17 Dec. 1913 to Ida Morse from Cromwell, Minn., Wilson made his home in Washington, D.C., where he died in Oct. 1969.

Where Baker approached the agrarian problem as an economist, Wilson came to it more as an anthropologist. He wanted to describe the social dynamics of rural life in America. At root were the values that defined this life. At issue was the impact of industrialization of this way of life.

Wilson addressed these problems in terms of a cultural approach – culture as defined by anthological – the manner in which a people live. [I summarize and much of this perhaps should be in quotation marks.] It consists on the one hand of tangible and material things such as foods, clothing, hosing, tools, machines, institution or education and for administering justice, institutions of religion, of marriage, of parenthood, and so on. It consists on the other hand of such intangible and immaterial matters as the customary habits and preferences that dictate choice and forms of food, clothing, and housing, and the way in which they are obtained; the socially transmitted knowledge of attitudes that determine possession of tools and skills, the accumulated lore and opinions that really decide what the content, manner, and ends of education shall be; the concepts of right and wrong, of duty and privilege, and the accumulation of habits and precedents that predispose what justice will be and how it will be obtained; the social transmitted attitudes toward the incomprehensive factors in human experience, and the inherited ceremonials that determine the spirit and the form of religious observance; the general social conditioning, the habits of thought and deed, the more preferences that concern and establish the methods and procedures of mating and of rearing the young. Intellectual, artistic and high-brow culture is of less importance to him.

There is an essential harmony in the things you do and think living on the farm. The farmer's hours with nature are undisturbed; long thoughts in solitude. The thoughts are about the things you do in daily life; about nature; about wind, rain and hail, sunshine and showers, field work, planting and harvest. The farmer works with nature and not humankind. He is intimate with the miracle of life and the earth. He is constantly attentive

to what is going on around him. His motto is "As ye show, so shall ye also reap." These are eternal aspect of the rural culture pattern.

The Christian culture is important – a higher force or law that works slowly but inevitably to make all the phases of our social life harmonious and fits our thousands of culture traits into a congruous pattern. All cultures possess this power to slowly attain new balance and unity when new facts and forces affect them. Changes have been imposed on these cultures: Changing economic factors, new markets, new government policies, technology and industrialization. Change creates disequilibrium but the system seeks a new, perhaps more complex, equilibrium. We cannot escape getting involved in questions of moral, philosophical, and spiritual values whenever we touch upon any social problem.

The freehold farm culture was centered on a family farm and a family economic enterprise. Almost everything produced on the farm was consumed on the farm. What little was sold was disposed of in the nearest town. More likely bartered. This was a rugged, crude and independent culture. It lacked luxuries and even common comforts. Life was laborious and drudging; and short. There was continuous contact with nature, knowledge of beasts and plants and weather, and an unquestioning acceptance of religion. A rugged love of liberty came with economic independence. There were books and papers and lyceum speakers at the Grange. Sunday was the sabbath.

Around such a fact as a hoe or a loom or an automobile there is a cluster of knowledge and attitude that give the hoe or loom or automobile a place in society. There is, first of all, the skill and learning necessary to operate them; and subsidiary knowledge and skills and patterns of social behavior develop.

The loom, for instance, must not only be operated but supplied with materials – involving a whole grouping of subsidiary skills and occupations. Disposing of the products is another skillset. When the small loom is set in the home, it generates its own patterns in the household. It involves a degree of specialization of labor within the family and makes the family more of an economic unit. Moral attitudes surround and support these facts. These constitute a measure of economic independence. They foster basic moral attitudes. With independence comes a hostility towards authority.

The effects of science do not end with material applications. The spirit and content of science has altered education and beliefs and has affected religious attitudes. It has produced vast social and economic rearrangement in the world at large and these have had a profound effect upon agriculture.

History no longer moves slowly. Never before has there been so much change. In 1776 cultivation was largely done with a hoe. The horse-hoe appeared in 1790. The iron plow came into general used in the 1820s. And there as a lot more to come.

By 1938, 20% of farmers were getting electricity. There were about 200 uses for electricity on the farm. Both seeds and livestock have been improved. Farmers get more milk, eggs and meat per animal. Animal diseases are better under control. This is scientific progress. Time required to cultivate, plant and harvest had been dramatically reduced. Farm families live in far greater comfort. Before the civil war the average farm worker took care of about 15 acres. By the time of this book it was 36 acres. But farmers are less likely to produce their own food. These benefits were then enjoyed by relatively few farm

families. Small farmers were (are) disadvantaged. Farmers have been forced to finance new capital requirements to stay competitive with a commercial market. Wilson, like Borsodi, considered these trends in commercial farming very serious. Cultural transition is a stress.

Small tractors cost under $500, only a little more than a team and tackle. They are inexpensive to operate and do a lot of work. It is still possible, however, to make a good economic argument for horses and mules.

Farm journals began to multiply in the 1830s and '40s. They urged scientific and rational farming. It was called book farming. It took to the end of the century for this to take full effect. Then came the county agents. World War I, with reduced labor available, put new demands on farms. They plowed up 40 million extra acres of land to help win the war. That took more machinery. With the coming of internal combustion, 35 million acres of feed land was no longer needed. Then the bottom fell out of the market in the late summer of 1921. Food prices dropped. European nations went back to farming. Export competition from Argentina and Australia increased. There was an increase in industrial tariffs by the US. There was growth of monopoly and price fixing by corporations. Farmer's equity declined. Telephones, roads, autos, railroads, consolidated schools, chain stores, mail-order houses, radio and movies, appeared.

This is the economic description. There are "roots and branches" to this problem that are not properly economic. We must consider more closely the human ends that economic things are supposed to serve. There is no single formula to direct the shift toward new rural patterns. There is no dogmatic, rigid-thinking, logic but there are a few principles to guide us.

Wilson agreed with Borsodi that the industrial revolution has introduced much ugliness into our rural culture. Yet it has also vastly increased the material wealth of mankind. The problem is to find a way to take what is good for mankind, and avoid, so far as possible, what is evil. Man has been bent too much to serve machines.

Technological efficiency alone is seldom or never all-important. Technology can create misery. Technology is driving people away from the rural life. Fewer are needed to grow things for the market.

Current policies and programs have not stemmed the tide of people moving from farms. Wilson described these programs. The Federal Land Bank buys up farms. The Resettlement Administration repairs the buildings. Promising families are carefully selected. The Farm Credit Administration buys the farms as they are settled and gives the farmer installment payments over a 40-year period. If the tenant leaves, the Farm Security Administration has first option to buy it back. FSA replaced the Resettlement Administration. And so it goes.

It is frequently argued that land values in this age are abnormally higher in respect to the current return that can be derived from the land. This was due to land speculation. It is also due to commercial markets. Wilson's solution is policy to increase farm income. And more and cheaper government credit.

Wilson, rather contrary to Borsodi, wrote, "I am convinced that these features of modern industrial society have increased material wealth and will not be deserted by society as a whole. I would agree with Mr. Borsodi, however, that when there is a great concentration of industry within very thickly populated urban areas there may be a loss of efficiency because of the necessity for new services that are incurred when pollutions pile up by the millions. … A tendency to decentralize industry has already developed – many private industries are scattering their various units over wider and wider areas, often putting their factories in rural areas to avoid excessive costs of urban settings." There is a middle ground between extreme self-sufficiency and extreme specialization; combining group activity and individual enterprise. "Self-sufficiency has its limits and must not be made into a cure-all or a rigid doctrine."

Wilson added: "Workers who have a homestead with a few acres for a garden and orchard, chickens and a cow, do not need a large cash income in order to have a decent and desirable standard of material welfare. Self-sufficiency should not be a basis for withholding from labor its share of the rewards of industry. Wages should be better than they are.

A great deal needs to be learned. We shouldn't go too fast or too far. It requires education. Education of urban people and changing their habits of consumption. Like Borsodi, he encouraged the use of small-scaled technology. Also, training in handicrafts, a bit of capital, the incentive of education, part-time work in old crafts of hand weaving, basketry and pottery – leisure time activity with some economic benefit and with it the satisfaction of making things.

There is satisfaction in simple and natural things, a philosophy of life, a slacking of hot greed and unrestrained personal ambition. There is the security of modest acreage, not lavish luxury, but with reasonable comforts. Humility of the kind inspired by religion or by a sensitive social conscience makes the importance of ambitious men seem mere pomposity. It is the philosophy of man against nature rather than man against man. He advocated the end of getting rich, of appearing on the society page, of piling one unwanted gadgets while millions have real necessity.

We must absorb the new world into our folklore and avoid placing the whole burden of social comprehension upon rational processes that have not yet produced full understanding in a single brilliant individual. Culture is infinitely complex. There is a limit to the amount of new complexities that man in society can assimilate and handle safely. The obvious irrationalities of this age, such as war and famine, seem to testify that society has already passed the safe limit of complex cultural innovation.

Combine the best of the new with the most enduring of the old. Our future now lies in the middle ground, in combining *some* dependent specialization with *some* individual responsibility, in joining *some* group cooperative activity with *some* personal self-sufficiency. When a new level of cultural integration has been attained, it may be time to plunge again into the unknow.

The Amish, Dunkard and Quaker farmers of eastern Pennsylvania have a culture that embodies the best virtues of the self-sufficient type of culture; but they have the advantage

of rich land which they exploit commercially in near-by market. Ditto the Mormon's of Utah.

In the culture of folklore, self-sufficient farming has sometimes tended to foster a provincialism that prevents an understanding of problems and affairs that are not purely local. Democracy requires that citizens have an understanding of our society as a whole. Tendencies toward parochialism and intolerance are never good, and in this period of social stress and strain, they are highly dangerous.

There are virtues in the older kind of self-sufficient, folklore farm. It's not a business but a home and a settled family enterprise in which all hands shared tasks and responsibilities in order jointly to make a living from nature. This provided economic security. There was old-age security. There was social stability. Family members were partners in a common enterprise. Within the community there was the homogeneity that develops among settled folk pursuing like ends. There was much neighborliness, and opportunity for rich friendship. These conditions provided an excellent opportunity for satisfactory social integration of individual personality. There are low rates of insanity. Relative few conflicts. Early marriage was economically possible. Friendships and neighborly understanding reduced the seriousness of psychological maladjustments.

Recreations and amusements were integrated into everyday life – social gatherings, husking bees, quilting parties, sewing bees and such were amusements built out of neighborly needs. The rural church was a social center as much as a house of religion; where neighbors shared information, courtships began.

This culture provided "the complete experience," which is psychologically very important. With their own hands they performed most of the tasks necessary to provide for their needs. They experienced a profound understanding of the complete natural process of life within a simple orbit. They lived through the season. Things related to other things. They knew where their bacon came from. They have a *complete* experience of life. The way to get the things you wanted was to struggle with nature rather than complete with men. You expended effort and skill directly to the task of making the specific object you wanted. What you got was the result of you own industry and competence, and of the favor heaven and the natural world bestowed. Production was the key to material welfare.

Wilson said that he was profoundly impressed by the unique opportunity for a natural life that a rural culture can offer. There is a physical basis for life that cannot safely be long ignore. Our existence depends upon the proper functioning of biological process which were evolved in a primitive environment. The structure of the body, the muscles and sinews, the nerve ends and connections, the glands and digestive tract were through millions of years conditioned to such a life. Urban culture debilitates and frustrates the neglect of natural functions and overtaxes the nervous system. There is a limit to the amount of cultural innovation and artificiality that the nervous system of man can endure. City life weakens us. A few may prosper but humanity as a whole cannot. The artificiality of this culture will be its own undoing. This condition reduces physical vitality and distorts psychological integrations. Prisons and insane asylums house some of the worst results. Suicides, sickness and neuroses, sanitariums, tonics and vitamins in bottles attest to others.

Farm life, on the contrary, is physically vigorous and direct enough to rest well upon man's fundamental biological makeup. The economic processes that take place upon the farm are generally both simple enough and complete enough to permit understanding and to foster a folklore based on real entireties. Furthermore, the farmer inclines naturally to associate his spiritual impulses with the mysteries of nature that surround him. His mysticism is generated by reality. His religion tends to be simple, vital and spontaneous.

The progress of scientific and commercial agriculture up to the present has been in many cases accompanied by serious evils that Wilson did not mean to minimize. But it is possible to keep the gain and reject the loss. We need not abandon science.

Ralph Borsodi A Plan for Rural Life

I've taken the liberty of moving Borsodi's contributions to *Agriculture and Modern Life* to the end. This book is about him. I think it significant that Borsodi was "on stage" with two extraordinary and influential individuals who shared, in part, his basic values but who were less strident in their opposition to urban industrial society than Borsodi. His three chapters and the dialog at the end of the book but him in context with the New Dealism of Baker and Wilson.

Ralph Borsodi was introduced simply as the founder of the School of Living, the Independence Foundation, the Bayard Lane Association, and the Van Houten Fields Association. I think the crucial point that was missed in that introduction was his leadership in the decentralist movement. The New Dealers were seeking reform. Borsodi and his fellow New Agrarians were seeking to revitalize a fading third culture. Baker and Wilson were somewhere in between.

To understand the confrontation between agriculture and modern life, said Borsodi, we need to define the two terms. The special cultural conditions of modern life came with the end of the medieval way of life. These conditions include science and guidance by natural laws rather than tradition, to prefer reason to intuition or revelation rather than by dogmas which are mystical or religious in their origin, and above all to give greater value to facts and figures than to the accumulation of experience which is properly called wisdom. Modern life is first of all scientific.

A second cultural condition which is distinctly modern is the differences between what we call the machine age and the handicraft age; between the age of steam, electricity, and gasoline, and the age of the windmill and the water-wheel; between the age of transportation by railroad, automobile and airplane, and the age of the horse-and-buggy; between the age of mass production in the factory, and that of cottage and custom production in homes and small shops.

A third modern cultural condition is represented by the contrast between our present paper money economy – bank credit and corporate organization of business – and the barter economy of the past with its organization by villages and regions, and its preference for metallic money and tendency to provide for the future in terms of land, livestock and goods, instead of bank deposits, life insurance, socks and bond; between an economy in which exchange takes place continuously in stores, and in which trade takes place intermittently in fairs and temporary markets.

Still another condition is the contrast between the city life of today and the country life of the past; between what is urban and metropolitan and what is rural and agrarian.

Borsodi said that agriculture is necessarily, and by its nature in fact, a vocation, a way of life. Agriculture is the science and art of cultivating the land, vs. agriculture as a business and industry. Agrarianism is something essentially American. Science could enrich it without surrendering itself to modern commercialism and industrialism.

Both the Hoover and Roosevelt administrations considered agriculture a business and had a counting house approach to it. We need to focus on the problems of agriculturists rather than of agricultural industry. Part-time family farming is just as valid as full-time "business" farming.

There is something wrong with both modern agriculture and modern life. What is wrong with agriculture today is caused by over a century of modernizing it by commercializing, by industrializing, and by urbanizing it. How can modern life be adjusted to what is inherent and inescapable in the art and science of cultivating the land?

High on the list of problems of modern agriculture are land speculation, of mechanization of farming, of misuse of specialized farming, the idea that soil should be treated as mineral or chemical capital to be converted into wealth, and our devotion to farming for the market with its accompanying high cost of distribution.

To achieve our form of democracy requires families living in the country and owning their own homesteads. The system of land tenure in such a society must be one which furnishes every family the opportunity to acquire land and to establish a homestead.

A hundred years ago probably 80% of farmers were landowners. Land had been made available free or at moderate cost. Now less than half the farmers own their land. Under speculation the value of farmland rose dramatically. During the Depression it fell again. The modern economy is boom and bust. That is hard on farmers – and society.

The solution can be found in Henry George's *Progress and Poverty*. Land should not be considered capital. It is a gift of nature. There are hidden costs to commercial agriculture. All products shipped from the farm, take with them some its fertility. Soil is exhausted, requiring chemical supplements. It is depleted of organic matter. It is eroded.

So long as we insist upon being modern in this way, no permanently good way of life for agriculturist is possible. It is only by renouncing both land-speculation and land-mining, and by ceasing to be modern as the term modern is customarily defined, that we can lay the foundations for a permanently secure and prosperous life for the agriculturist.

Agricultural land is a trust inherited by those who possess it today, to be used while they live, and to be bequeathed in at least the same, if not better, condition to those who follow them. Each generation of farmers consists of tenants for life only. Land is not a means of just making money.

Agriculture and the Machine Age.

In 1850 there were 20 million farmers and their surplus fed a population of 4 ½ million non-farm folks. Farm mechanization "released" 20 million workers from "a

degrading occupation," for industry, business and the professions. This is considered progress.

Modern agriculture has been engineered. Engineering is "the art and science by which *mechanical* properties of matter are made useful to man." Agriculture is not mechanical. It is not static. The land is organic, it gives life and vitality. This is not only biological but also psychological. Any attempt to treat the land primarily in an inorganic, chemical, and mechanical fashion is fundamentally unscientific and in that respect is a violation of one of the accepted standards of what is conspicuously modern in modern life. There are uses for engineering technology for small tasks [appropriate technology]. Gigantism is not a virtue; it is a disease.

Unlike business and industry, farming is uncoordinated and unorganized. Instead of specialization and continuity of operation, there is a diversity and discontinuity.

It's not the crops that are produced, not "carbohydrates, fats, proteins, and cellulose," but a way of living that is the objective of farming.

Borsodi approved of Ehrenfried Pfeiffer in Switzerland and recommended his *Biodynamic Farming and Gardening*. It is a practice long used. It rejects specialization or monoculture in favor of diversification and mixing of crops, plants and trees with their biological affinities. It uses no chemical fertilizers or chemical sprays but rather compost "and preparations which farmers can make for themselves." Modern agricultural technology was also challenged by Sir Albert Howard and his Institute of Plant Industry in Indore, India.

Agriculture and the High Cost of Distribution

As Borsodi asserted in his critical books of the 1920s, little of the price we pay for food goes to the farmer. Why is it that the great advances in technology, in industrial farming, have not lowered the price of food? It is because we pay in freight rates and the toll levied by middlemen.

Farmers were, and still are, exploited; their way of life belittled. They were told their complaints had no basis in economics. The economists, charged Borsodi, have been wrong. And because of this error, farmers, middlemen and consumers have received no adequate guidance in their discussion of this very question.

The actual economic principles involved have not been recognized by economists. One law they overlook is that distribution costs have an inverse relationship to production costs. Lowering cost of production results in larger quantities of product. Large farms cut cost by focusing on one crop in a given region. This product has to be shipped to mills/processors and then shipped across the country to consumers. Wheat in Kansas goes to mills in Minneapolis and then flour is shipped across the country.

The only solution for the farmer is to abandon the industrialization of farming, to reduce the extent to which he produces a cash crop for the market, and increase the extent and the variety of things which he produces for farm and home consumption, to apply modern methods and modern machinery to small-scale rather than large-scale farming, to begin the neglected task of research and scientific study and invention in the field of what he called domestic production.

Roosevelt promised farm relief in his campaign in 1932 and billions of dollars have been spent by the federal government for subsidizing farmers and yet the farmer is still struggling with poverty. That is because commercialized agriculture is not the solution.

Year by year, the country has increased its investment in industry at the expense of agriculture. Government has given corporations privileges farmers do not have. Yet agriculture supports more people than the six largest manufacturing industries combined.

Farming, instead of being scientifically developed as a way of living, is being made more and more into a money-making business.

We seek to ameliorate the horrors of industrial civilization by building schools, hospitals and other public buildings in our cities. By seeking to socialize more and more the incomes of industrial workers in order to introduce some measure of security into the essential instability of industrial employment.

Borsodi was not advocating legislation or a return to primitive farming.

> *"Primarily I am advocating education. The farmer must be taught that his economic salvation depends upon abandoning his present preference for producing for the market, the engineer must be taught that his real task in agriculture is to help the farmer to produce efficiently on a small scale; the politicians, that his real duty is not to subsidize the uneconomic commercial farmer, but to free the family-sized farmer from the handicaps which have been place upon him in the interests of commercialized agriculture, of the industrial system, and of the metropolitan cities of the nation."*

Returning to family production would result in people moving from the city to the land. What would happen if we doubled the rural population? Critics ask that if farmers cannot now secure a good living, how would doubling it achieve the aim? Borsodi was convinced that such a reversal could not only be made to produce a higher standard of living, but that it is entirely within our power to produce such a reversal. In an interval no longer than the span of one or two generations, a counter-transformation could be achieved by educating farmers of the country to the truth about the futility of the industrialization of agriculture. The task calls first for a new country life education, and later for the specific political action which would follow from such education – the ending of all subsides by way of tariffs, freight rates, and expenditure of public money.

Prices would not rise. Farms would become smaller. There would be a greater demand for small machines both in the farm home and for use on the farm. More land would go into woodlots and grass. There would be more of the home crafts and more domestic production.

To end poverty in the country we need a program for agriculture and for modern life which places the satisfaction of the needs of the farm family ahead of the development of the implementation of industry, the fertilizer industry, the packing industry, the milling industry and all the other industries and businesses which enjoy a parasitic prosperity. We need a new program which places the current interests of human beings ahead of the development of the perfect future industrialize state, and which does not assume that the expansion of industry should have priority over the happiness of the people who have to live today. Only with such a program will we be using modern knowledge for the purpose of lifting the curse of Cain off of the back of the farmer:

Cursed is the ground for they sake. With sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles, shall it bring forth to thee and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of they face shalt thou eat bread.

The Future of Rural Life.

This book concludes with a dialogue between Baker, Borsodi, and Wilson. Baker noted early that there are differences of opinion in spite of the similarity of their feelings on the spiritual values involved. As well will see, however, Borsodi's vision stands out. While they do indeed share a fellow feeling for the rural life, Borsodi, the decentralist leader, has a far more radical vision.

Wilson related that three weeks before this conversation they were all three at the School of Living to see some of Ralph's ideas taking form and others buddying. They came away with an admiration for what the Borsodi's are doing there. Wilson comment that he, his wife and a friend visited the Borsodi homestead several years before while they were away and had a chance to see the original Borsodi homestead without any of "your persuasive conversation." They were impressed by the order and care they saw. He saw it as a practical success. He said that it demonstrates to him that the Borsodi's have been able to come out from the city of New York and do for themselves first what they have been proposing that other people do. Wilson said that he was impressed that this homestead was built from the ground up and that it was a demonstration of a way of living and a set of ideals about industry and family life that could be multiplied widely over this country, "if only we felt that way about it."

Borsodi stated that he didn't object to small commercial operations, like Baker's chicken farm, provided it remains small. He had no objections to farmers' or homesteaders' selling their surplus production. But there are two question that he raised: one as to whether they might not find it more profitable to diversify and increase the variety of things they raised; and the other, the danger men run of destroying their natural likening for eggs and other creations of their own because of specialization in their production.

Borsodi added his belief that the reason that the bulk of the farmers of America have ceased to live this way is because they have been misled by their leaders and teachers that farming is a business; that farmers ought to specialize; and that it is more economical for them to abandon the older American ideal of independence and self-sufficiency in favor of commercial farming. It seems to me [he said] that this kind of specialized farming is flying in the face of nature. Farming by its intrinsic nature is a part-time occupation; and he didn't believe that the grave agricultural problem with which we are confronted today will ever be solved until we begin to apply technological discoveries of modern times to part-time and subsistence farming instead of concentrating them on commercial farming.

Wilson commented on the differences of background: He from a farm in Iowa, Borsodi a businessman in New York City. To which Borsodi responded that his wife was raised on an Iowa farm and she ran away from it to the city. "I am entirely convinced that neither the kind of farm from which my wife ran away nor the city from which I took flight is a decent place in which to raise human beings."

Wilson: "I find it stimulating and refreshing to argue with you, Ralph, because your ideas are different in many respects from mine and from those of the people in agriculture

with whom I have most of my contacts." Wilson didn't' accept everything Borsodi said at face value. He liked the farm life he grew up into [and left]. "You question a good many things" that he and his friends accept.

Borsodi responded by stating that the lack of satisfaction in commercial farming, as in the case of his wife, is that it does not hold out to them prospects of marriage and home ownership, nor of the financial prosperity which will enable them to buy the standard of living that reading magazines, seeing movies, going to city stores and so on, lead them to desire. They want to live the way they think the people in our big centers of populating live, and so they leave the farms and hunt for jobs in city industries and city stores and offices.

He added that his criticism of the economics of modern commercial agriculture is essential a criticism of conventional agricultural engineering. He disagreed with modern engineering assumptions that the farm should be a factory specializing in the production of some one crop. This assumption tends to destroy the farm as a home and as an instrument for the production of what the family itself needs and desires.

He thought that where agriculture has gone off into the deep, into an economically unsound program, has been in following the classic idea of the supposed benefits of the division of labor without examining how far that idea may be applicable to farming. It has been assumed that there is a net gain through specialization on the farm; but he did not think that in practice it has worked out that way. If it had, we wouldn't be worried about agriculture and modern life, and we would not be confronted with the really terrifying rural situation that O. E. presented in this book.

Regarding raising standard of living on farms, Borsodi acknowledged that perhaps some realized it but far less than generally supposed. He doubted there has been any net gain at all in agriculture. As a statistician, he discounted averages. What about the concentration of wealth? What about 20 million people on public relief? Where gains were made in lifestyle was largely due to the spoliation of the nature resources of a whole continent. It came out of using science and technology to exploit natural resources to produce wealth; consuming the fertility of the soil, cutting down forest.

Baker agreed with Borsodi on the rising cost of distribution. Wilson responded that he thought that much of the increased cost was for services not previously available. Borsodi replied that if Wilson is right "I haven't a leg left to stand on. But I don't think you are." Modern distribution cost doesn't improve services. Rising distribution cost are largely a result of cutting the cost of production [centralizing it]. It forces farmers to specialize. The more transportation and warehousing, the more people employed."

Where Borsodi faulted specialization and the factory system, Wilson faulted cultural lag – of keeping up with the pace of technology. Wilson did agree about a philosophy of the little man. He acknowledged the value of cooperative effort found in the Catholic Church and among leaders of Jewish thought. He acknowledged a lot of good in the distributist school of thought in England. There is a great deal of this sort of thing in all the democratic countries, especially in France and Scandinavia.

Should governments aid and support this type of thing? Borsodi responded that that was just what he was afraid of. People's behavior can be changed in two ways: compulsion and persuasion. Persuasion, at its best, produces results by personal changes

of conviction; at its worst, by appeal of conformity to fashion or public onion. He didn't believe we realize today the possibilities of persuasion as a means of social change. All our efforts at reform become political and become autocratic. Government should be limited mainly to police powers and leave it to individuals and voluntary groups of individuals to perform all the other functions that a good society requires."

Wilson stated that if you carry individualism to the extreme it becomes anarchy (to which Borsodi concurred). He didn't like socialism. Special interest groups, he admitted, can become cut-throat.

Borsodi clarified his point: The educator cannot escape the problem of trying to equip the unfolding personality with the truth. How do you implement that truth? By education, not compulsion. If you go to the state to make changes, you get compulsion. He said that it is the truth that the farmer is better off if he first produces everything that he can consume at home.

They ended this dialog with a discussion of the role of the church. Borsodi noted the role of the Catholic church in furthering the kind of independent, self-sufficing life they were discussing. Baker also acknowledged Protestants and Jewish organization.

Wilson said: "These groups are seeking to increase the economic security and independence of individuals, families and groups. They were responding to the wreck of so many old institutions and seeking escape from impeding turmoil – to build themselves little islands of independence where the strange forces at work in the world can't reach them.

Baker observed that the monastic institutions that grew up during the period of the decline of the authority of the Roman Empire, were not only religious institutions but also little islands of independence. The tides of barbarism generally washed around them and left them unharmed. They were a refuge of spirituality, and of the oppressed, and they preserved the treasures of ancient science and learning through an age of ignorance.

Borsodi noted that the great turmoil of the period of the Reformation also produced those minor Protestant sets which incorporated the values of independent country life into their religion. Many of these sects persist today. They are will adapted to endure the storms of this age, and of any other.

Wilson, in closing, reiterated that he didn't think we want to carry self-sufficiency of this kind to an extreme, any more than he should want to carry individualism, or socialism, or syndicalism, to an extreme, but noted that they all agree we should have enough of it to balance against the pressures of insecurity and dependency and statism and confusion that makes this age so troubled.

Chapter 6:

Ralph Borsodi: Prophet of Decentralism

The core principle of Borsodi's system is decentralism. In brief, decentralism, as Borsodi wrote about it, addresses the issue of personal independence verses centralized authority, be it church, state or commerce. It is the foundation philosophy about a lifestyle free of the influences of outside, coercive authority. It is about achieving our potential as human beings. The term "decentralism" was ubiquitous in the works of the School of Living and featured on the banner of its journals.

Borsodi was a leader in a decentralist movement. There were a lot of people involved and each had his or her own interpretation of what "decentralism" meant. Borsodi had his own definition of the term, and he worked diligently to perfect his expression of the idea. Reading through this chapter will give you a sense of where he was going.

Mildred Loomis, long-time association of Borsodi's, called him the "Decentralist Supreme". Borsodi was arguably the most outspoken advocate of decentralism in the twentieth century, and his influence was widespread. So was hers. As School of Living Director of Education, she passionately promoted decentralism, and towards the end of her life she wrote her own book on the topic: *Decentralism: Where It Came From, Where Is It Going?*

Decentralism is a term rarely heard these days. When a Google search can often produce millions of results, I found only 43,000 hits on "decentralism" (twice as many for "decentralist"). Searching the word "independence," I got over 300 million hits. To a certain extent, the two ideas have much in common; at least on the surface.

Centralized entities are tightly structured, rule-bound, and disaffirm individualism. Ant hills and beehives are highly centralized social organizations; they have no individuals, save perhaps the queens. Since the founding of civilization, both church and state have centralized authority, often absolutely. Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Russia are persuasive examples of the dehumanization of massive centralization.

Modern society, including governments, religious organizations and even schools at all levels are centralized and work to produce uniform (or factory like) "products." Corporations have highly centralized management, strictly defined corporate cultures, and have established an iron grip on the global economy. Digital media is also a centralizing influence.

Decentralism is a revolt against centralization in all its forms. Decentralism is perhaps best defined in the words, quoted by Borsodi in his *A Decentralist Manifesto*, attributed to Henry David Thoreau, "That government is best, which governs least. … That government is best which governs not at all."

The idea of decentralism has roots in the French Enlightenment and Revolution. Its objective was the overthrow of the centralized authority of the Church and monarchy. One of its leading proponents in France in the nineteenth century was Alexis de Tocqueville. Tocqueville visited and then wrote an insightful book about American life at its peak of decentralized social and economic organization: *Democracy in America* (1835). It should be noted, however, that Tocqueville saw a trend in American democracy towards mob rule.

There are a number of economic and political theories and social philosophies related to decentralism. Many of these are written abstractly as academic performances.

Typically, they address "what ought to be." Borsodi painted a vision of practice, not just ideas. His practical, down-to-earth vision of the ideal decentralized life was the self-sufficient homesteading community, a model he labored to the end of his life to establish.

Decentralism is not the same as decentralization. Decentralization is a common organizational practice. Banks decentralize into branches, the postal service to local post offices, retail outlets to malls, etc. But all these little pieces are tightly bound to the hierarchy of the massive entities they represent: There is one CEO and board, the pay checks all come from some central office and the products delivered from distant warehouses – in essence, a hive style.

Decentralism is a way of life. The ideal School of Living homesteading community is decentralized, or autonomous. The people who form such a community are individualistic, self-reliant and voluntarily collaborate for the sake of the advantages of these small communities. While these communities would likely engage in regional trade, they would be, as communities once were, largely self-sufficient. This was the way it was before the advent of the industrial revolution, the railroad in particular, following which these self-sufficient communities, particularly in the US, became a part of a mass, hive-like, society.

The root of Borsodi's decentralism was his personal practice of individualism. He was self-reliant to an extraordinary degree. Borsodi considered individualism an essential quality of being fully human, and without self-determination we cannot live up to our potential. This came out in his idea of "normal" living in *Education and Living*. Borsodi had a humanistic, you could say, compassionate, attitude towards individualism. In a sense he reflected the ideals of Jefferson, Emerson and Thoreau, Nietzsche and towards the end of his life, his friend Abraham Maslow.

The Individual as a Building Block

It should be made perfectly clear that Borsodi did not consider the individual an end but rather a means. While he quoted Nietzsche, he clearly understood the limitations of his philosophy. Borsodi was more inclined to the wisdom of Jefferson and Confucius. Borsodi was in fact a strong advocate of family and a community builder. He knew that a good society required men and women of character, with healthy personalities, who exerted a positive influence. He described the normal, that is optimal, individual, family and community in some detail in his *Education and Living*[22]

The Road to Decentralization

During the 1920s, as he and his family established their homestead, Borsodi wrote three books critical of the American economic system culminating in *This Ugly Civilization*. The first two volumes were pioneering works on consumer advocacy. In *This Ugly Civilization* he made a definitive statement about a proposed program for an alternative way of life, laying out the foundation for both personal and economic independence. He

[22] Free pdfs of the two volumes of *Education and Living* can be found and downloaded at these links: https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B1wQ6T5I3eBVY2RyWjZjcmpKUFk/edit and https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B1wQ6T5I3eBVd0FabTZUdGR6aGM/edit.

formed the School of Living five years later and continued to work to the end of his life on a revolutionary program of self-reliance.

This Ugly Civilization[23] was a response to what Borsodi called the age of hysteria that defined the beginning of the twentieth century. He denounced, in a thoughtful and systematic manner, the ills of the age and called for a peaceful revolution, away from the ugly, urban-industrial life that had come to dominate American life. His socio-economic context was the age of the Robber Barons who subjected workers, including children, to cruel living and working conditions with Scientific Management that literally reduced the human worker to mere cogs in the machinery of industry, and forced them to live in the squalor of cities built to support the factories.

If individualism is an essential quality of the healthy personality, what are the barriers to achieving it? Borsodi's indictment of the factory system can be seen in these lines:

> *"Now what has the factory done to the worker, and what is it continuing to do to him?*
>
> *1 It relentlessly mechanizes the workman and reduces all workers, except the few "blessed" with administrative genius, to mere cogs in a gigantic industrial machine.*
>
> *2. It decreases the number of workers engaged in productive and creative labor by reducing the number of workers required to produce things and by condemning the remaining workers to elaborate methods of flunkeying for one another.*
>
> *3. It arrays worker against employer, separating capital and labor into two independent and mutually antagonistic interests, and inflicts upon society an unending succession of foolish and often bloody strikes.*
>
> *4. It makes it almost impossible for individual workmen to be self-sufficient enough to develop their own personalities.*
>
> *5. It destroys the skilled craftsman to whom work is a means of self-expression as well as a means of livelihood, by offering work only for machine feeders and machine tenders, thus making it more and more difficult for skilled workmen to find employment.*
>
> *6. It creates workers without initiative and self-reliance, and fills the state with citizens who lack a sustained interest in public affairs and good government.*
>
> *7. It transfers the satisfying of the economic needs of the worker from the home to the factory, robbing the worker, his wife and his children, of their contact with the soil; depriving them of intimacy with growing things--with growing animals, birds, vegetables, trees, flowers; and destroying their capacity for fabricating things for themselves and of entertaining and educating themselves.*
>
> *8. It condemns not only the natural robot, but those capable of creative effort in the crafts, the arts and the professions, to repetitive work, because it leaves open no field in which they may exercise their talents and earn a livelihood.*

Since those days the global economy has eliminated a majority of America's industrial jobs and moved us to a "service" economy model; from blue-collar to white-collar, many of these jobs at low wages. With the Great Recession of 2008, labor force participation, if not the official "unemployment" rates, declined to the lowest in over half a century – only some three in five in the labor force were working or looking for work.

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[23] A digital copy is available on-line at the School of Living web site: http://www.schoolofliving.org/Borsodi/This_Ugly_Civilization.pdf. It is also available in a new print edition with a new introduction by Bill Sharp: http://www.thisuglycivilization.com.

The 2020 Crisis produced an incredible spike in unemployment in the second quarter alone, as social distancing closed down much retail trade.

The plight of the buyer is no better than the factory machine feeder and machine tender or office/store clerk. The buyer becomes a shopper, or today, a consumer, who earns money to exchange for goods and services. In Borsodi's day most women were homemakers and they had become the chief buyer in the family; no longer performing the productive work their mothers had done. Today it takes two incomes, both parents working fulltime, to acquire the stuff we are conditioned to want. The economy is consumer driven. We have lost our sense of "production." Indeed, "homemaking" is now a politically incorrect term.

In *This Ugly Civilization*, Borsodi moved from a thorough critique of the American urban-industrial dis-ease to a description of the advantages of homesteading life. As was his way, he stated the problem and presented a solution. It was not a theory but based on nearly a decade of conscientious practice. Being a master cost accountant, he did the numbers for the economic advantages of home production of food and other goods, and his argument is compelling[24].

The real problem he found, however, was that of changing the mindset of the American public to make it receptive to a transformation back to a human-scaled life. The mindset of the ugly civilization is what he called the "quantity mind." The quantity mind is about stuff; about numbers and dollars and cash flow. It is driven by what we today know, in terms even clearer than in Borsodi's day, as the financial industry, the source now of nearly 40% of corporate profits' that is, profits on the trade of money[25], not of goods and services. The economy is about the numbers. Economists are "scientists."

Then, in the age of print media and at the dawn of the radio age, advertisement was already working to condition people to work for money to exchange for goods others produced[26]. Ford at least understood that he had to pay his workers enough to buy the cars they built. The radio was but the start. Borsodi witnessed how television came to dominate the advertising world. During his life, television was available on only a few channels and all of the stations went off the air at midnight. He did not see the rise of the cable T.V., the personal computer and cell-phone world where indoctrination went to 24/7 and became personally targeted. Indeed, consumer conditioning has become a highly developed science and art. That science is expressed in a rapidly evolving field called User Experience (UX). The consumer pays for that experience – more cost added. Culture itself has become commercialized. As such it has detached us not only from nature but from the roots of our own society.

The drivers of the commercial world seek, in Borsodi's words, a mass or herd mentality -- John and Jane Consumer. We must break free from both the herd mentality and the quantity mentality and develop "quality mindedness," he asserted.

Borsodi was realistic in understanding that not everyone would, could, or wanted to break free. Psychologists, such as Erich Fromm in his *Escape from Freedom*, have

[24] Borsodi elaborated in "realistic economics" in his *Prosperity and Security*, published by Harper and Row in 1938.
[25] Money or fictitious financial commodities such as derivatives.
[26] At least then most of the production was "Made in the U. S. A."

documented this phenomenon. Borsodi clearly saw that the tool for liberation from the herd mentality was education. This is a view he shared with other leading minds of the day. This was, remember, the era of the Populists and Progressives, two movements shaped by Jefferson's ideals that a self-governing people must be a well-educated and informed people and that the farm was still the foundation of American life and values.

Borsodi put teachers at the top of the list of social leaders; not necessarily the person with a degree or job in education, but, indeed, those who were self-informed, well read, critical in their thinking, perceptive and aware that things are not as they should be, and who sought to serve their community by helping others learn, to become what was latter known as self-actualized.

Borsodi was seeking a revolution and a renaissance. In his words:

> *Social changes find their genesis in three forces: (1) the forces set in motion by great natural convulsions--changes in climate such as those caused by the movement of the glacial ices--and which are independent of man[27]; (2) the forces set in motion by the efforts of ambitious individuals to sate their appetites for self or power--the forces set in motion by an Alexander, a Caesar, a Napoleon, and to come up to date, by the forces set in motion by the activities of a John D. Rockefeller, an Andrew Carnegie, a J. Pierpont Morgan; (3) the launching of new ideas, as for instance, the forces set in motion among men by the idea that the world is round; by the idea of immortality; by the idea of equality; by the idea of democracy.*
>
> *It is the operation of the second of these forces that explains most of our social, economic, and political history. Quantity-minded men, in their struggles to sate their ambitions, have been able to impose their wishes upon mankind because of their domination of the herd-minded masses and the dependence upon them of the quality- minded individuals.*
>
> *Let the quality-minded individuals free themselves from this dependence upon the quantity-minded and the civilization of the future will be built upon the basis of intelligent ideas of what changes are desirable in society and how it is most desirable to bring the changes about.*

Borsodi sought to identify and describe the quality minds of his age and offered this outline, from the works of Harvard President and progressive educator Charles W. Eliot, of what the quality-drive person should take from his or her education[28]:

> *1. An available body. Not necessarily the muscle of an athlete. Good circulation, digestion, power to sleep, and alert, steady nerves.*
>
> *2. Power of sustained mental labor.*
>
> *3. The habit of independent thinking on books, prevailing customs, current events. University training, the opposite of military or industrial.*
>
> *4. The habit of quiet, unobtrusive, self-regulated conduct, not accepted from others or influenced by the vulgar breath.*
>
> *5. Reticent, reserved, not many acquaintances, but a few intimate friends. Belonging to no societies perhaps. Carrying in his face the character so plainly to be seen there by the most casual observer, that nobody ever makes to him a dishonorable proposal.*
>
> *This is an excellent concise statement of the values to which men of superior qualities attach importance. But it is most interesting as a revelation of what Eliot himself considered the "durable satisfactions of life."*

[27] Alas, this is an age of "changes in climate" and they will very likely shape the evolution of history to come.
[28] These are qualities that can be found in the works of Emerson and Thoreau.

In simple terms the difference between the quantity-minded and quality-minded person can be found in these two statements:

> *The quantity-minded react to how many; how large; how expensive.*
>
> *The quality-minded react to how fine; how unique; how beautiful.*

The quality-mind person, I should add, is by Borsodi's definition a self-sufficient homesteader. He devoted several chapters in *This Ugly Civilization* to promote and describe his ideal of homesteading. Only by freeing ourselves from the domination of the quantity-minded can we hope to achieve liberation. Emerson called it self-reliance. Abraham Maslow describe such a state as self-actualization.

Maslow, in his hierarchy of needs, saw that the higher realm of attainment was achievable only when we are free from what he called the deficiency needs, the basic needs for which consumers virtually slave to acquire. Borsodi understood there was a special quality of being to be working to meet the basic needs of life. The values of the upper part of Maslow's pyramid are found in the achievement of the good life at the lower levels. Borsodi married means and ends.

Borsodi added chapters about the Barriers to achieving quality mindedness and how to overcome them. Again, the answer is education. One of the bright beams of Borsodi's genius was his capacity to penetrate to the essence of issues, to achieve a compelling clarity of understanding – something radical - that Counterculture era sociologist C. Wright Mills would later call a "lucid summation." Mills said that the lucid summation, the product of the sociological imagination, provided not only clarity but the moral energy needed to affect change in a broken society.

Homesteaders

Building community is an immensely challenging undertaking. Most "homesteaders" today are, in fact, at least marginally standoffish. Both formal studies and practical experience tells us that many have the attitude of hermits to some extent - "just leave me alone." Very few, however, are remotely self-reliant and are, therefore highly dependent on the global factory system they, for the large part, despise. Repeated efforts to build communes and communities have had relatively rare instances of "great success."

Americans are, by definition, highly individualistic. Too often this translates into "isolated and alone." Alienation is a way of life. A scattering of friends, perhaps; a communal association based on profound emotional commitments, rarely. This is not a normal state of being for human beings. We are social animals, tribal by instinct. As Buddha said, life has no meaning without human association. The practice of social distancing coming out of the 2020 Pandemic in many ways reinforces this isolation. It is also producing new tools for remote connectivity. We will have to wait to see how this works out in terms of community.

Our history before industrialization is one of communities, of Main Streets, of a sense of place and neighbors who cared for each other. True, they had conflicts, but so does any family. It takes deep emotional bonds to make a community work.

The failure of community in America, essentially the result of urban-industrial development, is arguably the greatest crisis of our time; building community continues to

be one of the most challenging issues. Unless and until we achieve a communal and agrarian reengagement, it is unlikely there will be any real prospect of building a better way of life.

Borsodi envisioned homesteading communities of 40 or more families. He saw families as three-generation units with groups of between two and three hundred: a village. That happens to be one of those as yet not well-understood numbers that represent the scale of successful human social organization. It is also the average number necessary to provide a division of labor sufficient in scope to assure a high degree of local self-reliance.

Since we no longer have the institutions around which a successful community can be formed, Borsodi proposed a School of Living as the center of the homesteading community. This is not a school in any way like those we see today. In *Education and Living*[29] (1948) Borsodi did indeed acidly critique modern education; and we've gone a long way downhill since.

In *Education and Living* Borsodi also continued his critique of centralization with a focus on how it has adversely affected public education at all levels. This involves not only schools but "educational" media such as advertising, radio and TV, and social media in general.

By then, following the carnage World War II, much of the world had witnessed the horrors of political centralization carried to an extreme. Germany, Italy, Russia, Japan and just then emerging the People's Republic of China, demonstrated how centralization could readily reach levels of not only completely annihilating individuality but also mobilizing the masses to commit acts of genocide on an unprecedented level. And, just at the time *Education and Living* came out, the world entered what would become a generation-long Cold War, a war with many hot and lethal conflicts in which more millions of lives were consumed. The ideological issue was a centralized economy of communism versus the more open market economy of capitalism – tyranny vs. the free world. And both sides had the capacity to utterly destroy human civilization.

The post-World War II era also witnessed the rise of the multi-national corporation, business giants that transcended borders and regulations, with revenues larger than many countries and with a highly centralized form of organization. Modern capitalistic multinational corporations have administrative structures that are, ironically, virtually indistinguishable from communist organizational theory. and differ from communist societies not in kind but in degree[30]. These corporations today dominate the world's economy and have a huge influence on national governance.

The School of Living

The formal organization of the School of Living marked a turning point in Borsodi's work. As noted, Borsodi outlined a School of Living program in *Flight From the City* in 1933. He had, by that time been working with prospective homesteaders for over a decade

[29] Available on-line and for download at (Vol. 1) https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B1wQ6T5I3eBVY2RyWjZjcmpKUFk/edit, and (Vol 2) https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B1wQ6T5I3eBVd0FabTZUdGR6aGM/edit.

[30] The "degree" defined largely in terms of if you didn't like working for one corporation, you could change jobs, you could join unions, and where allowed you could claim the privileges of national citizenship to insure certain basic human rights.

with several families coming out from the city on weekends to work with the Borsodi's at Dogwoods.

The purpose of the Borsodi's homesteading program was to help families improve the quality of life, but quality is more than homegrown food and fiber. A "normal" human being requires a quality education not only in basic skills but in critical thinking and access to the world's accumulated store of knowledge. For those of us already "educated," this requires reeducation.

In *Education and Living* Borsodi elaborated the model of the School of Living. As noted, most of volume one consists of a critique of "mis-education." Most of that critique focuses on the problems of centralization; centralization of industry, the economy, politics and education. He defined the idea of decentralization in these terms: "Decentralization … is not merely the opposite of Centralization; it is not merely the negation of Centralization. It is a positive process." As he described it, decentralization is communitarian, cooperative, provides local autonomy in the governance of affairs and promotes personal freedom.

Borsodi's decentralization is not a political model at all. It is first and foremost a model for development of human potential and the means to that end is education. We need not a new state but a new state of mind. The second volume of *Education and Living* explains Borsodi's vision of achieving decentralization in detail. The second volume is in two parts: "Right-Education" and "Re-Education." It explains how to educate for the "normal" human being and for achieving the "normal" way of living. This is not the "normal" of the bell curve, the average of a population. This is normal in terms of what a human being is innately capable of. It is not the "normal" of "the noble savage" but the norm of a person whose capacity for life, whose capacity for action, has been nurtured by education and training for life; who is the product of a School of Living. Volume two provides an insightful description of what and how a person of high individual and social potential can be developed.

Borsodi developed a university program to support his educational system during the 1950s using *Education and Living* as a textbook. During this period, working with a group of dedicated supporters, he developed and refined his problem-centered system, which I believe was an important phase in the progress of his system.

In *The Education of the Whole* Man (1963), in a sense Borsodi's master text on his educational model, he outlined what he hoped would be a sequence of volumes, each devoted to one of the major aspects of human life; in short, a detailed outline of the curriculum of The School of Living. That book, in fact, I learned, was the text for the problem of education.

Borsodi wrote *The Education* in India, drawing in no small part from the example of Gandhi. Borsodi proposed his curriculum for the elevation of men and women most receptive to uplifting the human race who in turn would become the teachers in their own communities. This was Borsodi's model of leadership: the teacher.

There are four qualities, he said, that distinguish this natural leadership:

1. *They are thoughtful. They have not only learned but seek to penetrate and understand what they have learned.*

2. *They are concerned. They realize this is an age of crisis and personal involvement in addressing the issues of that crisis.*
3. *They are courageous. They are willing to struggle and sacrifice for the cause of human advancement.*
4. *They are dedicated. They are devoted to achieving something of greater than personal scope*

Just after he arrived in India, Borsodi's Gandhian friends asked him to write his "Panhumanist (Decentralist) Manifesto" (1958). In this pamphlet Borsodi outlined his philosophy of life centered on decentralism, starting with these lines:

> *A new world is being born.*
>
> *If this new world is to be a better world than the one now dying and to make possible a fuller fruition of the human spirit, then it will be very different from the Capitalist world of today, and different from the world which the dictators of Russia and China are providing, and different from the Socialist world into which most of the world is now drifting.*
>
> *Concerned and thoughtful men and women are challenged to arrest the present drift and drive into a mechanized barbarism, and to contribute to the birth of a world in which persons will be free to realize their potentialities as creative beings. Such leaders must have the courage to assert themselves and must discipline themselves to think about all the institutions essential to such a world.*

The pamphlet is in three parts:

1. Humanization and Social Renaissance
2. Political Liberty
3. Economic Justice

It begins and ends with a call for leadership, a leadership not of warriors, kings, priest, politicians, businessmen and financiers, but of "concerned and thoughtful teachers," writers, artist, poets and even men in women in professions who "consecrate themselves to the search and realization of what is true, what is good, what is beautiful." In short, the quality minded. Above all else these gifted people must teach.

How we achieve decentralization is through education, learning, and moral re-education. It is also about how to revive the small community and how the small community is nested within the larger human social system; an ethos Borsodi called "pan-humanism." All human beings, all around the world, he asserted, have the right to a quality life, to a just and secure form of life that is denied them by the predatory practices of established and dysfunctional urban-industrial social institutions.

As noted above, Mildred Loomis published her own work on decentralism: *Decentralism: Where It Came From – Where Is It Going?* (1980). In this book Mildred gave a short history of decentralism but focused on where the School of Living was taking the idea. There is some wonderful history about the School of Living and its role in the decentralist movement of the day. This was written just as the Counterculture, a movement Mildred was named grandmother of, was ebbing. It was the dawn of the Reagan era and the globalization of the American economy.

The Rise of Centralism

There is a story about how we got to centralism that is instructive. It tells us a lot about the various ways people have found to live on the Earth. It starts with the appearance of the first of our kind some 200,000 years ago in Africa.

Over the course of 190,000 years, human society consisted of hunting bands and tribes. There are still aboriginal people in many places around the world who live in this fashion. These societies exhibit a high degree of social cohesion. There is typically a chief/elder, a shaman and a council. Tribes are necessarily small and rarely exceed a few dozen members. There is often fierce territorial competition between these roving bands. The chief occupation of men is hunter/warrior, their job is to kill game and enemies. They use the same basic tools (weapons) and organization skills for both tasks. The purpose of such a society can be defined as survival. To achieve this, nomadic groups, evolving over eons, have settled into what is essentially an iron-bound structure. The American Plains Indian societies represent one of the highest achievements of nomadic tribal organization[31].

About ten thousand years ago, following the end of the last Ice Age, a new way of life appeared which involved staying in one place, planting crops and domesticating animals. With agriculture, tribes settled into villages. Villages are groups of up to a few hundred persons. Society was still organized around chiefs/elders, councils and the shaman became priests. The early village was essentially autonomous. While they had new tools for tillage, they often foraged, fished and hunted. They were armed with clubs, spears and bows to repel hostile invaders, typically nomadic groups. They too had exceptional social cohesion. They too served the iron-bound moral imperative of survival. There are still millions of traditional villages and small towns around the world today, albeit caught in the web of modern industrial society.

Village culture was a very successful way of life. Agriculture produced surpluses of food and populations grew and villages proliferated, and inevitably cities emerged. City cultures appeared spontaneously in six places; four in the old world and two, a bit later, in the Americas. It took a lot of trial and error over thousands of years for villagers to learn to form these first cities. Early cities (and most cities throughout the history of agrarian civilization) were places of only a few thousand people.

The city was to change the nature of human existence in a dramatic way[32]. Though still small by modern standards, those cities were vastly more complex than village societies and the need for social organization far more demanding. They were ruled by kings and priests and authority was more formalized than before. They required professional classes of administrators and soldiers. Writing and cyphering were invented to establish control of complex activities.

Our modern economy developed in these early cities. So too did social stratification, laws, bureaucracies and an increasingly hive-like culture. Ninety percent of the population worked on the land and supported those who lived in the cities. The farmer, at the bottom of the pyramid became not the foundation of society but a lower class.

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[31] The movie, *Dances With Wolves*, or better, Michael Blake's original novel, *Dances With Wolves* and the sequel, *The Holy Road*, provide a penetrating insight into the nature and loss of these cultures as a result of American industrialization.

[32] More than half of the world's population now lives in cities, the US is over 80% urban and there are 40 countries even more urbanized.

With a surplus of food, trades and crafts developed and with them a division of labor which defined scores of different forms of livelihood that became essential for civilization, created a sophisticated economy, and required more exacting control. As cities became kingdoms and empires the level of authority necessary to maintain and defend them increased dramatically and they became increasingly rigid. Elaborate systems of laws were enacted, and death became a common penalty for breaking what we would consider today relatively minor infractions. We call this phase of social evolution "civilization." In history books, civilizations are typically great empires, such as Rome, but there were hundreds of smaller civil societies around the world.

The city introduced rigid hierarchy into social organization. Villages were essentially egalitarian and self-ruling. Cities were far more complex and far less personal. Rulers emerged who based their authority on raw power. Conflict between city states became widespread, and farmers were forced to seek protection from the king and his soldiers because of marauding nomads and later from competing cities. The dependence was mutual but asymmetrical.

In addition to professional soldiers were the professions of priest and scribes and the birth of bureaucracy. Kings and armies and temples needed money; merchants who had the money gained a certain power in a class somewhere between peasants and the nobility and later in the nineteenth century when they began to displace landed aristocrats. From the beginning of the city we see those who produced being reduced to a subservient class and those who ruled, and commanded wealth, rising to the top of the pyramid of society. That's not a political statement; it is just history. Borsodi believed the dominance pattern could be extinguished by a return to an agrarian life, much as had Jefferson, Emerson, and Gandhi, and he provided an extensive framework for achieving that.

American Agrarianism

Throughout the course of civilization, the vast majority of people lived and worked on the land. It took a long time before the farmer – often a peasant, serf or even slave – became the American ideal. In North America, and particularly the protestant British colonies, far from the centralized authority of church and state in Europe, the freely held small farm became an honorable way of life, at least in the northern colonies, while aristocracy and slavery dominated the southern colonies.

By the time of the Revolution, which was a revolt against encroaching centralized British authority, a free, democratic, agrarian culture was securely in place in the American colonies. With the American Revolution, the farmers became the soldiers, and the English tyrant and his armies were sent packing. Well into the twentieth century the agrarian ideal was the bedrock of American character. The bulk of Borsodi's personal philosophy came out of this period of American culture. It was during his lifetime, however, that industry finally came to dominate the economy and undermine the agrarian way of life; the values of life on the land faded into history[33].

[33] I saw that happen in the agrarian community where I grew up during the last decade of Borsodi's life.

Industrialization

Following the American Civil War (the first industrial war), our industry and cities grew to gigantic size. Railroads and telegraph lines stretched across the continent. In barely a lifetime the vast wilderness known as the American Frontier was settled and the pioneering, agrarian, era drew to a close. Until the industrial revolution, economies were by default highly localized. Transportation, and work, was muscle-powered (wind at sea). Then came steam power, and from steam, we quickly moved to electricity and internal combustion; from horse and buggy and oil lamps to automobiles, airplanes, electric lights and home appliances, telephones and radios. Life became increasingly more complex and interdependent. Many Civil War veterans lived to see this transformation.

Big industry and great cities were twinborn. Centralization as we know it today is a product of urban industrialism. The very idea was anathema to rural farm folk. When the American Republic was established, closer to the Jeffersonian and New England ideals, government was carefully restricted. With industry (ironically since it resists regulation), came more government. The proponents of economic growth, the Federalists, wanted stronger government for the very purpose of advancing industry. State supported central banks were established to mobilize vast sums of capital and a national monetary system. Growing cities required huge bureaucracies to keep services going. The Federal government slowly grew but then became more centralized during the First World War and vastly more so during the mid-twentieth century.

Industrial distribution networks demanded exacting organization and careful timing. The standard time zones were introduced in 1883 to coordinate transportation across the continent (along with the standard gauge railroad track). Time zones spread around the world to facilitate global commerce the following year. England with its vast merchant marine and navy, became the baseline of the global time system.

The Decentralist Response

The decentralist movement was established early in the 19th century in both the US and UK and steadily grew over the century. The Populist and Progressive movements, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, mobilized massive sympathetic support for agrarian values. But it was a losing battle. Borsodi became a leading champion of decentralism just as the US New Deal administration launched the most massive program of centralization in the history of the country. But that was only the dress rehearsal for the quantum leap in centralization that occurred during World War II. Bureaucratic authority has steadily grown since. Business corporations have also grown into massive bureaucracies. Today, digital technology gives these authorities intrusive and almost instant influence over every aspect of life.

Borsodi in a Nutshell

I have been trying to present Borsodi in, as they say, a nutshell. I've described the shell, but I'm not sure I've yet got the nut. The question remains, just what was Borsodi's personal philosophy? As noted, Borsodi was a very private man. Little is known of his personal life and his deeper thoughts. He didn't, as far as I know, keep a journal. His letters are businesslike. He rarely expressed his private thoughts. His written legacy is

programmatic, not philosophical. Mildred Loomis, his closest associate for over 40 years, probed this question in her biography of Borsodi. She listed authors who she knew influenced Borsodi, some from the distant past, others from the founding of the American Republic, many related to educational and economic innovation. She described his works and writings, but she was never able to articulate his personal philosophy; however, it is clear that decentralism is the foundation.

I think the root of Borsodi's philosophy is a principle even deeper than decentralism: it is Individualism. It is clear to me that he was a radical individualist. He was independent from the age of 15, living in his own apartment and earning a living. He shunned school and preferred the library for his education. He surrounded himself with books and read them intensely. His pioneering homesteading was not only the back-to-the-land hallmark of self-reliance that inspired many, but also a declaration of his own independence. He clearly exhibited the qualities that Emerson called "self-reliance" and that the celebrated humanistic psychologist Abraham Maslow (and they were friends) called "the self-actualized personality. "He was, however, not withdrawn; he was a humanist and an organizer and a leader. He devoted a long and productive life to projects that had the singular intention of liberating individuals and building a livable society.

Is anarchy part of this model? The short answer is no. If anarchy means disorder and protest against established political regimes, it is not a part of Borsodi's vision. Anarchy as a political-economic theory has a historical association with violence. The objective of such revolutionary anarchy tends to be a socialist, centralized, state. Today anarchy is associated with survivalists, preppers, doomsters, and the like, and there tends to be a lot of guns and talk of violence and definitely anti-communitarian associated with them. That is definitely not a part of Borsodi's vision. He was communitarian to the core and, as we shall see, a man of peace. In his view, the good life comes through voluntary collaboration among psychologically healthy people.

Free America

In 1937 Borsodi and friends Chauncy Stillwell and Herbert Agar started and edited the journal *Free America*. As I will relate elsewhere, there was a considerable distributive/decentralist movement in the US and UK at the time, and Borsodi quickly became a leader in this movement in the US. When Stillman and Agar went to war (both were Navy Reservice officers) Borsodi continued *Free America* and started a School of Living journal named *The Decentralist*. Following the war, he and Mildred Loomis started a new journal, *The Interpreter*, which continued to support the decentralist position. It eventually absorbed the *Free America* mail list. It was also the platform for Borsodi's problem-centered education philosophy. Issues and articles were classified by the universal problem they addressed.

The Individual and The School

The other core aspect of Borsodi's work is a distinctive style of education. Borsodi, as noted, was self-educated. Although he was awarded Masters' and Doctorate degrees and founded a university, there is no evidence that he ever attended college, and there is some doubt he even graduated from high school. Those who met him, including renowned

scholars, remarked on the breadth of his knowledge and understanding of literature. His writings clearly illustrate a well informed and retentive mind.

I don't think Borsodi intended to leave a philosophical statement. That would be essentially counter to his idea of individualism. He sought not to inform others but to motivate them to ask the questions, to read, to dialog, and to form their own individual views of life. He sought to motivate them to a life dedicated to self-reliance, self-sufficiency, an unassailable self-esteem and service to the uplifting of humanity. This was to be accomplished through a systematic program of re-education. He had a detailed and well attended seminar program.

His problem centered, adult, self-education, is about removing dependencies in life. It is not an academic or scholarly pursuit per se. It is about learning how to live well. While he had a powerful intellect, his interest was always focused on the practical problems of living.

I find Borsodi's School of Living model very carefully thought out. There is far more to it, as I probe into the depths of the thinking it was built on, than meets the eye. I believe his decentralism involves two ideas: The first, as mentioned, is the individual, who is the product of the second element, the "school." I want to convey something vital in the relation of these two ideas. Both are stories about the human essence. Both inform our vision and give us purpose. Let's go a bit deeper into the idea of the individual first.

The individual

Decentralism is about the institutions that govern society. It probes the question of how little governance, which translates into coercion, is necessary to maintain a stable social order. Norms, or rules, define the structure and function of a society or of an organization. The question is, how much structure do we need? If we do not wish to have rules and coercion, we need an alternative framework to make community work. For centralized organizations, the rule is imposed from without. For a dogmatic religion[34], the rigidity of a monastery or seminary is necessary to shape the norms of congregations. If we are not self-reliant, we get controls. For a truly free society, it is a different matter. For the "Normal" human being, social order must come from within.

Our individual uniqueness is inescapably inherent in our DNA and in our personal consciousness. The biological feature that defines us is a highly evolved brain with a complex cerebral cortex. What defines us behaviorally is that we are intensely self-conscious, and we have an extraordinary capacity for language that allows us to think as no other species we know can do[35].

Individualism as we know it, found in democratic society, is a very modern expression of behavior. It took a long time to develop this ideal. The European Renaissance and Enlightenment laid the groundwork. The fruition of the idea came to modern form for the first time with the creation of the American Republic. Our Republic has a system of laws that guarantee individual liberty to an unprecedented degree. We have developed a

[34] The word "religion" is derived from the root "religio," or rule.
[35] We also have extraordinarily dexterous hands and eye-hand coordination.

large literature and practices for self-development. But it is a constant struggle to maintain personal liberty.

Even in democratic society we have created levels of government from town to county to state to national; each defining the political context of increasingly larger groups of people. Each level is defined by the authority of the larger governmental entities (counties, states, national), for example, local ordinances must be in compliance with state and national law. Government administrative structures, rule-bound bureaucracies, have become larger, more complex and less flexible. Industrialization created a higher level of standardization. Our culture has been "homogenized."

During wars, and during the Great Depression, national governments took control, and massive government has since become the norm. There are those who believe that the solution to the world's problems is to form a world government, representing even more massive centralization and complexity, to subordinate national governments. Massive corporations control the economy and digital technology culture, and the schools standardize the formation of young adults. The young around the world are, through school and the digital media, becoming more identified by age than by place of birth. Developing countries, as Borsodi warned, are becoming economically and culturally standardized. In short, as centralization continues, we become increasingly more dependent and thus less individual.

The Dark Side of Individualism

Individualism has a light and dark side, several dimensions of this in fact. Some of these traits are perhaps genetic, but many are learned. On the dark side, individualism can be expressed as egoism, self-centeredness, selfishness, hedonism, and narcissism. There are sociopaths and psychopaths. And there are those born with autism who lack, in varying degrees, a capacity for emotional or empathetic attachment.

Modern science has cast doubt on our capacity for individualism. In psychology, Freud proposed that there is a deeper and darker layer in the psyche that dominates personality. Behaviorism does not accept the idea of a thinking and self-determined mind. Darwinism, and more modern forms such as social biology, interpret human behavior in terms of raw animal instincts. Not all cultures or political systems accept individualism. Some sociologist, historians and philosophers have voiced disdain for individualism and/or democracy. Marx, for example, placed historical determinism over individuality. Spengler predicted a dark future of society reverting to a feudal form of rulers and virtual slaves. Nietzsche and Carlyle had no use for democracy – they championed aristocracy. Alexander Hamilton favored a plutocratic aristocracy for the new American Republic. Periods of severe social instability turn people towards authoritarian figures, and we are seeing that today in the US and elsewhere. Erich Fromm, in his *Escape From Freedom*, made a psychological study of how people flee the responsibility of individualism. Hoffer, also noted above, wrote of the role of the loss of individuality, of meaning and purpose in life, as the root of mass movements.

The dark side of human nature is not really a new story: it is found in the ancient religions and it is given graphic expression in Manicheism, Zoroastrianism and the Hindu sagas – the struggle between light and dark, good and evil. Christianity gave us Satan and

his demonic hoard. Christianity considers "man" as a fallen creature, most of us doomed to eternal damnation. In a sense, science and religion can be in agreement about a baser quality of human nature.

The Bright Side of Individualism

Humanistic psychology, on the other hand, has given us a literature and practice for developing the healthy personality. From Emerson to Maslow we have a profound literature about self-reliance and self-actualization. There is something here that speaks to an essential quality of our humanity. But it is a still, small voice that is easily lost in the clamor of modern life.

We are also a social species, indeed one of a very small class with a highly evolved instinct for society, a class of only 19 species, out of millions, which E.O. Wilson classified as eusocial. Such species are instinctively unselfish towards their own kind, or at least kin. We are the only higher form of life in that group, and we are the only species that can choose to be otherwise.

Our social instinct is profoundly reinforced by our distinctive capacity for language. Language gives us the capacity for self-awareness and unprecedented powers of communication, but language is a social phenomenon. Individually and collectively we have an extraordinary capacity for learning, for defining and solving problems, and for passing on what is learned from generation to generation. We thus have the unique capacity for a rapidly evolving synthetic society. The flip side, however, is that, as we detach ourselves from the natural world of which we are a part, we lose something essential in our being. Borsodi, in going back to the land and forming healthy families and healthy communities, sought to reestablish that essence. We also have a unique capacity for self-deception. As the Red Queen told Alice, "[S]ometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast."

There is a paradox in the two sides of our nature: a profoundly social species that is individualistic to the ultimate extreme. That paradox has troubled us throughout human history. But this is a yin-yang symbiosis that has slowly evolved our society to modern form. It took thousands of years of cultural evolution to make us who and what we are today. Emerson, Thoreau, Nietzsche, Jefferson and Paine, Franklin, George, Gandhi, Maslow, Borsodi and a host of others worked diligently to promote, and increasingly to preserve, individuality as a birthright. But we have just begun, at least I hope it is begun, to transform ourselves into a more humane state of existence. To do so requires a new form of education.

Healthy individualism is harder to explain than pathological behavior, but it seems to be associated with a commitment to larger ideas, which is to say morality. These include justice and fairness. This rational moral imperative distinguishes the healthy from the unhealthy individual. It appears to be learned behavior.

Is Individualism Cause or Effect?

The movement towards individualism is a delicate balance. We need to better understand the forces behind this process. I think the most important question we need to ask is whether individualism, as we know it today, is a product of the evolution of society

towards democracy; or is it a product of the breakdown of normative order? To put it another way, did the Enlightenment, for example, which opposed the authority of church and state, facilitate the decline of the old order, or was it the product of that decline?

Individualism first appeared during a period that historian Karl Jaspers called the Axial Age, more or less 2,500 years ago. The concept of the individual appeared seemingly spontaneously across the then known world from Europe to Asia. A new literature emerged with the Greeks in the west, to the Hebrews, Zoroastrianism, the Hindu Vedas, Buddhism, Lao Tzu and Confucius in the east. These philosophies and religions defined much of what we think today. Each sprung out of a time of trouble, during a breakdown of their respective societies. That they all occurred over the course of a few centuries is intriguing.

I will argue that the decline of the European Medieval order made individualism an imperative. It started about the time of the Renaissance. Individualism as we know it today, is a new state of consciousness and, as indicated in the evolution of human society, one that is not in accord with our preferred state of being which is intensely communal. Freedom, and the responsibility that goes with it, the consequence of self-choice, can be frightening. Relatively few readily embrace it. We are steadied in our growth when guided by those who have made progress in this direction; that is, through the agency of teachers and mentors.

While the Enlightenment, which defined much of modern individualism, may have challenged their authority, church and state were in fact already in rapid and irreversible decline. Leadership, both sacred and secular, was failing — and continues to do so. The type of community that defined the tribe and village, from ancient times through the Middle Ages, was disappearing. Early twentieth century sociologists, humanists and agrarians lamented the loss of communal values in Europe and the US. The existentialists following World War II expressed it. Established communities, from rural towns to urban neighborhoods, went into dramatic accelerated decline toward the end of the third quarter of the twentieth century. Postmodernism, the philosophical movement of the late twentieth century, echoed this sense of despair and nihilism. This trend is continuing into the 21st century. It has left us increasingly adrift and disillusioned.

Personal freedom can be a terrible burden. Individualists are required to choose their actions and embrace the consequences for themselves. They live on the edge of the law, so to speak, always on shaky ground. Social capital, which comes out of our instinct for cooperation and interdependence, is rapidly declining. People feel increasingly powerless in an era that is becoming progressively complex and chaotic[36] and the institutions our forbearers relied on have clearly failed. This is overwhelmingly true of government and of religion. Many, indeed, now turn in desperation to individualistic, "designer," forms of exotic spirituality and even Christians have increasingly chosen to be unchurched and craft a religion of their own, describing themselves as "spiritual beings" rather than "religious persons."

It is clear that the defining feeling of the age is alienation, or anomie, a term that means "without norms," or more precisely, a condition of society that provides little moral

[36] There is a profound difference between "freedom" and independence.

guidance for individuals. Over a century ago, Durkheim coined that term in his classic study of suicide. He attributed it to industrialization. People in modern society, he concluded, kill themselves out of despair that is due to the loss of a sense of belonging[37] that had eroded in the industrial age. It is ironic that an age that gives people longer lives encourages more of them to end theirs.

Eric Hoffer, in his best seller, *The True Believer*, wrote of a disturbing social consequence of alienation. His concern was with the effect of massive social dislocation channeled into mass movements, particular under Hitler, Stalin and other twentieth century tyrants. In many cases people who had lost hope turned not away from but toward strong leadership, to centralism. They gave up their individuality for a hive-like existence. In this twenty-first century we see this fanaticism in global terrorism, and we have seen it emerge in increasingly polarized politics.

Modern industry works to artificially fill the void it created in our souls. Factories spew out shiploads of stuff that advertising claims will make our lives easier, sexier, and make us admired by others. Social media, in reality an advertising media, is all about "look at me." Mass market hedonism and narcissism, however, far from liberating us, enslaves us. Digital and social media replaced face-to-face meetings with tiny screens. The 2020 Crisis has taken social distancing to a new level. It is not clear where this will go.

We live in the information age. Access to knowledge is virtually instantaneous making us potentially the best-informed people in history. But the media is the message and the digital media represents an overwhelming flow of stimulus. There is little time to assimilate, little time to think, little attention devoted to the world beyond the screen. But this too has become a comforting escape from reality. We are losing cultural cohesion. We have become culturally illiterate, and, as a result, we are losing a sense of innate meaning in life.

The quick fix, hedonism, narcissism, social media "look at me," and anarchy are not expressions of nor the means to achieve individualism but, as described by Fromm in his book by this title, an "escape from freedom."

A Path to Liberation?

Borsodi cataloged all of these ills; we but add footnotes. He did so, as was his manner, to clearly define the problem before us, and he worked diligently to provide a framework for solving those problems and restoring quality living. He created his School of Living to provide the organization and framework for preparing people to make the transition in their lives to becoming more self-reliant, better family leaders and community builders. The need to raise the bar on the problems of man and society have become increasingly apparent in 2020.

[37] There are those who believe the high level of suicide among veterans may be as much or more the result of the loss of the solidarity of fellow soldiers than the trauma of prolonged lethal encounter with an enemy.

Chapter 7

Education and Living

Education and Living (1948) was, in my opinion, Borsodi's master work, into which he poured a lot of experience and research. It came at an important juncture of his career. Over the course of nearly 30 years he had established a homestead, taken leadership in community and economic development, incorporated the School of Living, created a land trust corporation, established two homesteading communities and inspired others to form, developed his original and authoritative problem-centered framework, established a comprehensive curriculum and research library, developed a number of practical homesteading "divisions," prepared a plan for St. John's College to become a self-sufficient community, proposed a peace plan that anticipated the (albeit more decentralized) United Nations, edited *Free America* and served as a leader of the American decentralist movement, collaborated with Aldous Huxley drafting a book (unpublished) about decentralism, wrote seven books and coauthored an eighth, and produced numerous other small publications.

Borsodi considered education the key problem, that is, unless and until we have a program for the proper education of humankind, there will likely be little change in the "progress" of history; or should I say, in the saga of the rise and decline of societies through history. It was clear to Borsodi, Toynbee and a number of historians and social scientists that this is indeed a period of decline. We either ignore the realities of history, deny them, and accept the consequences, or make the effort to create the foundation for a new culture. That was Borsodi's mission.

Education and Living was the first of three volumes Borsodi said he was working on at the time. Over the next nearly twenty years, he completed the other two: *The Education of the Whole Man* published in 1963 and *Seventeen Problems of Man and Society* in 1967. Between *Education and Living* and *The Education of the Whole Man*, Borsodi also developed a problem-centered university curriculum. I have presented chapters for each of these phases of Borsodi's career.

Borsodi was keen on documentation. Over the course of the years spent developing his system, he produced a huge volume of work. Between these three books alone there are nearly 1,800 pages and much of it is in fine print. In respective chapters I have attempted to extract the key principles and rationale for the School of Living and provide a workable summary of Borsodi's system. This summary provides a blueprint for further development of the system.

For some reason, *Seventeen Problems* became the text of Borsodi's system, and I believe that was a mistake. That book is an encyclopedic dictionary, not a textbook, and Borsodi intended it to define the many ways human beings have attempted to solve their problems. He wrote another small book, *The Definition of Definition*, to explain his rationale for *Seventeen Problems*. *Education and Living* provides the foundation framework for the system. *The Education of the Whole Man* provides the theoretical framework. *Seventeen Problem*, the reference source, is an index to the accumulated wisdom of humankind.

These books, I must stress, are not just about education but also about living – about solving the problems of living. The objective is found in what Borsodi defined as "normal" living--individual development, the family and community. *Education and Living* describes each of these in detail.

Post-War School of Living

World War II brought an end to the first phase of Borsodi's work building homesteading communities. It was, of course, a major change for everyone. Despite its policy of isolationism, with the start of war in Europe, the US began to build a vast armaments industry, and there were a lot of good jobs opening in factories. People began to have wage security, and the Depression finally came to an end.

Many men and women joined the armed services. In 1939 there were just over 334,000 American military personnel. The following year that number increased by about a third and in 1941, with the US formally entering the war after December 7th, the number jumped to 1.8 million and by the end of the war was over 12 million. There was a serious labor shortage requiring millions of "Rosie the Riveters" to go to work on assembly lines and clerks in offices.

In addition to building a massive industrial complex, priority was given to mechanizing farm production. The number of farm tractors went from 1.6 million in 1940 to 2.4 million in 1945. Nearly as much priority was given to building these tractors as to military vehicles. Farm production increased dramatically.

It is perhaps not surprising that the residents of Bayard Lane and Van Houten Fields elected to dissolve their land trusts and assume their homes fee simple. They got their comfort and security and turned their backs on the dream of a new agrarian culture. The New Agrarian movement, of which Borsodi was a key player, came to an end with the war.

The Problem-Centered System

Borsodi and the School of Living remained in operation during the war focusing on education. As listed in Chapter 7, he had a formidable list of seminars organized around the major problems of living. I believe those seminars provided much of the content of *Education and Living*.

The "problems of living" came out of a practice Borsodi started in the '20s. As a recognized leader of the back-to-the-land movement, many people consulted him about their problems. He took notes on 4 x 6 cards that he habitually carried with him, and made notes of other problems he found in the newspapers, magazines, and books he read. Each bears a date and time. These are certainly real, not abstract problems. He added extensively to this deck of cards during the 1930s. After about a thousand cards[38] he sorted them into categories. Borsodi was clearly a taxonomist: he was good at analyzing masses of information into a workable classification of key ideas.

Borsodi found the subject-centered approach to education inadequate and sought a more effective system. What he developed was a workable list of problems shared by all people in all times and places. "What," he asked, "are the really important problems of

[38] His deck of cards eventually became some 8,000 statements.

living which all men and women cannot avoid facing, and without proper answers, they cannot live like a human being?" The evolution of this classification took years of trial and error. It finally came down to a definition of objective human action – the "problems of living."

Borsodi stated his case in a presentation he made at a conference in 1940 in New York City:

> "Believing that the full development of each human being is the supreme value, the School of Living has as its primary purpose to assist adults in their study and use of the accumulated wisdom of mankind."
>
> "Believing that such study and use of wisdom is best facilitated by being related to the universal and perpetual living experience of human beings, the School of Living aims to assist adults in becoming aware of and defining the major problems of living common to all people.

In short, education must be person-centered and holistic.

In *Education and Living* Borsodi published his first full definition to the problems of living framework. There were first eight, then eleven, and then thirteen (and finally seventeen) universal problems. The thirteen problems of living in *Education and Living* were:

1. Purpose: What is the purpose, my vision, in life?
2. Validation: How do I know what is true?
3. Nature: What is the nature of nature and of human nature?
4. Association: How do I associate with other human beings?
5. Gregational: How do I associate with groups and how do groups associate with each other?
6. Operational: How do we organize collective enterprises?
7. Political: When and how should legal coercion (law) be used in a good society?
8. Education: How do we organize educational activities to improve human wellbeing?
9. Ethics: What makes an act right or wrong?
10. Esthetics: What makes an object beautiful or ugly?
11. Occupation: How should a person spend the whole of his/her time?
12. Possessions: How should land, money, and goods be owned or possessed in order that each person can achieve optimum living?
13. Health: How can I achieve maximum energy (health), both physically and mental, through a long lifetime?

Of great importance, it should be understood that the problems of living are not separate, isolated issues. They belong to a whole, universal, system. They are like, and were soon represented as, the spokes of a wheel joined at the center. We may address each problem in turn, but at the same time we must also ask how they relate to each other.

The system is not merely a method for solving problems. It is a teaching tool that develops the capacity for living a good life. Underlying this method is not only dealing with issues but also developing that quality mindedness Borsodi wrote about in *This Ugly Civilization*. It is a program for seeking the essence of what it means to live as a human being.

I should emphasize that Borsodi's approach is strictly educational; there is no psychotherapy involved. Borsodi lived in an age of psychoanalysis, of Freud and Jung. Like them, Borsodi knew society made us "crazy," or in his terms, abnormal[39]. But unlike the head doctors he believed that detachment from the cause of mental distress was arguably better than trying to cure the effects. Homesteading and decentralization are means for detaching ourselves from abnormal society.

We cannot, however, achieve normal living by instinct or intuition because we are thoroughly conditioned, and it is an arduous task of correcting ourselves. It requires reeducation, and that means a school of normal living, a school at the center of small independent communities of self-reliant, economically independent, homesteaders. By reeducation, by learning to solve the problems of living, we can be made whole. If we live a normal life, we will be normal. A normal life, however, is a state of mind as well as a detached, simple, lifestyle on the land. Right education elevates our character and gives us a sense of nobility in life.

The objective of right education is the solution of people's problems, not social issues. "Modern problems proliferate and remain unsolved, because we spend so much time trying to deal with society and world problems without first dealing with family and community problems." If we focus on normal families and normal communities, wrote Mildred Loomis (in *Go Ahead and Live*), "world problems would diminish and fade out in two or three generations." Borsodi noted that this would eliminate once and for all the need for "society," for nations, the institution that has spawned endless wars in the modern era.

We needed to take definitive actions to change the way we live. How? Borsodi advised:

- We need to rigorously test our assumptions, our norms of living
- We need to prioritize individual growth and fulfillment
- We need to learn to make right decisions to advance our humanity
- We need community, but, as Borsodi emphasized, the purpose of the group is the individual and not the reverse.

Education and Living

Education and Living was written as four parts in two volumes. Borsodi personally set the type and had the volumes printed. The binding is made of paper but the pages are sewn. My first edition has lasted well. Original copies are rare and expensive but a free and downloadable digital copy can be found at this link.[40]

Volume I of *Education and Living* consists of two parts. The first part is a treatise on education. A large part of it was devoted to the developmental stages of early life. The second part was a radical critique of modern education, or mis-education. These first two parts are a statement of the problem.

[39] Abraham Maslow, founder of humanistic and transpersonal psychology, Mildred footnoted, commended Borsodi's ideas and included references in his work.
[40] Education and Living pdf: https://www.schoolofliving.org/borsodi

The second volume is also in two parts. The first of these is Borsodi's definition of "right-Education." The bulk of Part III consists of his description of "normal" living. Part IV is about re-education where Borsodi described his adult oriented program of learning.

I should point out that at this period of Borsodi's life he was the leader of a movement that opposed the centralization of industry, government, education and other social institutions. *Education and Living* is a decentralist manifesto. The book can be considered prescriptive as well as descriptive. Borsodi drew on a new agrarian movement with roots in the late nineteenth century. His views may thus appear in some cases archaic. Some of these views may be considered political unfitting by current standards. However, a full expression of those views is of historical interest.

Forward

Borsodi wrote that *Education and Living* "is nothing less than an effort to explain not only modern man's failure to achieve the good life … but also to outline the manner in which he might learn how to live like a normal human being."

Borsodi related the history of the development of the School of Living. The School was started in his home, Dogwoods. Generous support came from Seward Collins, Richard Crane, Graham Carey and Chauncey D. Stillman. Nearly $300,000 (equivalent of $5.6 million in 2020) was spent under Borsodi's direction before 1939 and the outbreak of World War II. A major part of this was evidently spent on land and construction.

Warren Wilson of the Town and Country department of the Presbyterian Church and Mrs. William Sargent Ladd helped launch the School. Others who served on the original Board and were Clarence E. Pickett of the American Friends Service Committee, Mgr. Luigi Ligutti of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, Van Alan Clark, B. C. Dunlop, Samuel D. Doge, W. C. McKinney, and Mrs. Elizabeth MacDonald. The first staff were Doris Pelton Webster and Earl and Eleanora Gordon. Borsodi also thanked his wife and family and Mildred Loomis for their assistance.

The central idea of the School was not "instruction in country living and in folk arts and handicrafts; nor the development of a better method of dealing with unemployment; nor the solution of the housing problem," wrote Borsodi. "*It was the scientific validity of decentralization* –of the truth of the conviction slowly burned into my consciousness … that the progress and centralization for which modern industrial man has been taught he should live, was based upon a tragic error – a tragic misunderstanding of the true meaning of science – and that a whole new program of education has to be developed which would substitute for the prevailing mistaken objective in living, an end or aim which was right, proper and, as I have come to think of it, normal."

Borsodi began to summarize his work in 1941. As stated above, he intended three works: *Education and Living, Education and Ideology* and *Education and Implementation*. He made the following comments about those works.

Man, noted Borsodi, can be taught to believe anything, to adopt any ideology. That has been seen in the recent global war and ideological standoff with communism. Education is not the end to life; it is largely a means. "*The ends and purposes of life are embodied in the ideologies which human beings accept or in which they believe*. The whole of

the study I am calling *Education and Ideology* constitute an exploration of these bodies of idea and the development of a method for choosing among the thousands of ideologies which exist or may be formulated, those which can be used to teach men, individually and in groups, how to behave, and how to deal with the crisis facing them, like normal human beings." This objective was realized with *Seventeen Problems*.

Regarding *Education and Implementation*: "*Man's life individually and socially depends upon the implementation of his ideas."* If he fails to live the good life, to solve the problems of living "it may be due to his mis-education; it may be due to the invalidity of his ideologies; it may be due to errors in implementation." And, "[M]en must not only be rightly education; not only must the ideas which they adopt be in accord with the norms of living, but so must be the methods and instruments which they use in practicing or implementing them." The scope of this work includes "the entire accumulated knowledge and wisdom of mankind … integrated." The structure of this work was to be constantly enlarged. This was further developed as praxeology during the 1950s and came out with *The Education of the Whole Man* in 1963.

Part I: Education

Chapter I. Education and Ideology

Industrialization came about from the application of science to the control of nature, to "vast manufacturing centers," to markets, to rapid communication, to "population hurriedly gathered into cities from the ends of the earth." Habits of living had thus been "abruptly" changed.

Before the factory came the "household and neighborhood system." The household was the center of life; of the family's economy. Raw materials were produced, and finished articles were made and used locally. Every member of the household did their part. Children were gradually initiated into this way of life. John Dewey, rather too progressive for Borsodi, did write: "We cannot overlook the factors of discipline and character-building involved in this: training in habits of order and industry, and in the idea of responsibility, of obligation to do something, to produce something in the world."

Borsodi continued: "In all this there was continual training of observation, of ingenuity, of constructive imagination, of logical thought, and of the sense of reality acquired through first-hand contact with actualities." There was "modesty, reverence and implicit obedience." There was a ready acquaintance with nature, with plants and animals. It was a process of continuous education. These lessons have been lost to city-breed children and no formal schooling can supplant them.

Agrarian life shaped what people learned. Industrial education, on the other hand, seeks to adjust children to conform to social expectations. The teacher is also trained and conditioned by these expectations. Conditioning runs very deep in some societies. The greater the centralization of authority the greater the conditioning. We have been appalled by the Nazi, Communist and Maoist nationalist ideologies; and today by Islamic fundamentalism. And they by ours. We live today in a society that is ideologically polarized. Should we not be sensitive to Borsodi's basic premises? Can we not ask if there

is some more fundamental basis of life founded, as the Greeks proposed, on truth, goodness and beauty?

It is not just about the steady accumulation and propagation of new knowledge. There are eternal verities. Truth is eternal. This does not mean that the ancients were the final word on truth. They rather sought to embrace it. And they created the classical literature of their respective societies – a literature Borsodi thought should be shared and studied thoughtfully. The essence does not change. We are seeking the essence of being human.

For Borsodi, the central institution in society is education. It shapes all other institutions. The leader is not the politician, priest, plutocrat, king or soldier – at whose hands humanity has suffered: "The time has come, it seems to me, when our schools should reflect the educational ideals of all the really great teachers of mankind, and of nobody else."

Borsodi wrote: "I believe that in a very real sense all life is education; that every person is an educator, and every relationship and every single event is life education." And again, education begins in the home. We expect parents to teach their children to live up to minimal standards of being a good person. Are the same levels of love and trust found in schools? To what standard do teachers conform? Do they live up to Borsodi's standard: "*the stewardship of the accumulated knowledge and wisdom of mankind*" (italics his)? The operative term is "stewardship." Borsodi added: "To the teacher [steward], truth is a holy trust to be professed unconditionally."

Borsodi places a heavy burden on the teacher:

> *"The true doctrine is made of sterner stuff. It demands much more of the teacher. It requires him to sacrifice comfort and position, and to face poverty, and if necessary, embrace exile, rather than to buttress the ideology of the moment if he believes that ideology false. In the final analysis it may require him to drink hemlock with Socrates, or risk torture and martyrdom with Hypatia, rather than abandon the stewardship entrusted to him. For the true doctrine requires the teacher not to follow, but to lead. The true role of the teacher and the school in society is to instruct everybody, both old and young, in the art of living intelligently, decently and tastefully, and in the art of organizing all social, political and economic institutions so that it is possible for people to live that way."*

Chapter II: The School, The Teacher, and the Educated Individual

Education is more than schooling; it is "an inescapable accompaniment of everything experienced in life." Everything we know is a result of learning, of education. "Every individual is therefore the product of a life-long process of education." Living is education. While genetics may shape our development, the content of our minds comes from experience. Human beings, endowed with consciousness and language, are uniquely defined by learning.

Human societies shape what we learn and how we learn. We may learn what is true, what can stand the test of utility, or what has no basis in the laws of nature or of common sense. This brings us to the topic of mis-education. Miseducation may be that which is omitted or the teaching of things that just don't stand the test of life. The most powerful

educational force today is advertising. It is, unfortunately, not constrained by standards of truth.

There are four fields of education, the "cultivation which develops, either rightly or wrongly, first the perceptions, secondly the intelligence, thirdly the emotions, and finally, the actions of human beings." Right education attunes us to the world we live in. Right education produces a "normal," or optimal, human being capable of functioning effectively in life. Mis-education produces intellectual and spiritual deficiency.

Instruction is also of four kinds: Authoritarian, perceptual, experiential and exemplary. Learning is therefore of four kinds: Submission, comprehension, discovery and imitation.

Most of what we learn comes from others, teachers, living or dead. There is a difference between a teacher who has a sense of responsibility for what is learned and those, such as advertisers and propagandists, who do not.

The school is "any institution, organized either partially or exclusively for the purpose of enabling one or more individuals to engage in learning under the guidance or instruction of a teacher." The list of "schools may include homes, churches, factories, offices, stores, newspapers and magazines, movie houses and broadcasting stations, hospitals, charitable institutions, political parties and social movements, government bureaus and military establishment. The content of instruction may be structured (curricula) or not.

A good "school" equips individuals to live as normal human beings. "It will furnish him with some of the accumulated knowledge and wisdom of mankind; it will imbue him with some devotion to the good, the true, and the beautiful; it will help him to some extent to develop the potentialities of normal human beings. It will help prepare him to understand his experiences; it will help teach him how to adjust himself to events which he may not at the moment be able to control; and, finally, it will help him in seeking to improve, from the standpoint of normal living, both the physical and material world and the cultural institutions by which he is environed. In sum, every good school will in some manner help equip him to live more like a normal human being."

"The supreme challenge to teachers today is the production of rightly educated individuals; individuals who will live as human beings are capable of living not only for their own sake but also for the sake of mankind as a whole. … Good habits, good institutions, and all the other good things are the by-products of the right education of the individual."

From the Chinese classics we learn that the order of a community starts with the cultivation of one's personal life and then a regulated family life. It starts with self-understanding, or as the Delphian Oracle put it: "Know Thyself." The cultivation of the personal life is the foundation of the order of all things.

Chapter III: Adult Education and Adult Problems

Borsodi noted that American society is led by aggressive, selfish and short-sighted individuals, rather than by the wisest and most disinterested. This must be changed. Where do we start?

Right education begins not with juvenile education but with adult education. Adult education focuses on the problems of living – not the problem of how to make money but rather a framework that embraces all aspects of life. There is no single solution, no all-inclusive formula. There are, as noted above, at least thirteen major adult problems of living. These problems are universal.

A unique feature of Borsodi's system is that it is focused on the individual. The solution of problems is an individual endeavor, not a public or social issue to be solved by an expert or agency. In a democratic society we are expected to each make our own decisions and to become informed in order to do so. We thus need schools and teachers who can re-educate adults. The role of the wise in the community is not to solve its problems but to empower every adult to do so. They are the stewards of the community, and a product of life-long education.

Schools *prepare* us for life but there is a curious disconnect between childhood school learning and adult problems. We need to continue to learn in order to address the problems of living during our adult years. Borsodi also noted that school is compartmentalized, indeed the institutions of life, such as church and state, are in separate compartments, and so is the business world. "The concept of universality is for all practical purposes extinguished. We need to understand the full scope of the life we live."

He further stressed that our problems are our problems, not the group's, not society's, not government's, not the expert's. Specialization tends towards "one size fits all." It serves the interest of the institution that is making the decisions. We have acquired a lot of information, which continues to accumulate at a rapid rate, but we lack adequate tools for evaluation and integrating it in such a way as to make it useful to individuals and communities to address their own problems. There are, indeed, few who have the necessary scope of knowledge to bring about this integration. It is they, not the varied special interest, to whom we need to turn for stewardship of the community.

The thoughts of most people are shaped by advertising, by professionals "who are paid to disregard objective truth. …. Today not merely public opinion but the common beliefs, tastes and customs of the population are manufactured to order." We are bombarded by advertising in the mass media, in newspapers, magazines, radio (and now TV and the digital media). It has become increasingly true that the time we spend reading and the books we are offered are more for entertainment than application.

I believe Borsodi would have been appalled at how culture itself has been commoditized. In his day, the market was about products. Over the course of the last quarter of the twentieth century, the US developed a service economy as manufacturing went offshore. More recently, the advertising market has shifted yet again to user experience, or UX. The focus is on the consumers' emotional engagement with products and services. In effect, we now pay directly for what was once an advertising cost. It has become a new commodity in itself.

What Borsodi means by adult education is not remedial, or delayed, education, i.e., not what they missed while young. It is not more undigested information. It is not "mere intellectual titillation and entertainment." It is about broadening and developing the individual.

There was then an ongoing revolution in juvenile education with leaders like John Dewey and yet, noted Borsodi, "Americans have [not] shown the slightest improvement in their ability to deal with social problems." The Great Depression and World War II attested to our inability to either prevent or adequately prepare for the issues of the culture we have created. Children cannot be educated to prepare for such events. These issues require the attention of seasoned and responsible adults.

Borsodi had a variety of issues with progressive education. So, what is the alternative? He wrote:

> *"My answer is by furnishing people in every community a new kind of leadership through the agency of a new kind of educational institution; by establishing schools of living or community universities and through them, providing such leadership in every community; by organizing the potential leadership of communities – the educated, thoughtful and concerned minority – in such a manner that every individual and group in the community will think it natural to turn to the accumulated knowledge and wisdom of mankind for light upon the problems which they have failed to solve or which they have not been able to solve properly."*
>
> *Through such study groups and under such leadership, it would for the first time become possible to bring to bear upon these problems integrated, objective, and impartial study of the manner in which mankind in its long history has tried to deal with problems of individual living and the social problems of groups, communities and nations.*
>
> *In such schools of evaluation and integration of all knowledge and wisdom would fire the imaginations of the people. Such schools and such leadership would make it possible to escape from the segmentation and special interest with which the problems of living are disposed today.*
>
> *Evaluation and integration of the data of all the sciences and of the wisdom of all teachers, past and living, on each problem would become possible from the standpoint of the whole human being and the whole of life.*
>
> *A specifically educational method and educational leadership would develop and deal with individual and social problems on the basis of reason, not superstition; universality, not insularity; of common welfare, not special interest; of function, not convention; of science, not prejudice; and of beauty, not novelty.*

Borsodi did not suggest that this system would not prevent problems from occurring but rather would prepare people to deal with them adequately.

Borsodi referenced the Danish folk school movement, and the teachings of Bishop Grundtvig who believed he could uplift the lives of Danish farmers through inspired education. The Folk Schools transformed Denmark from a medieval to a modern nation. It reduced tenancy and made farmers independent (far more so than even in the US).

Borsodi cited John Frederic Oberlin (1740 – 1826), an obscure Protestant pastor in France, who transformed a local church into a school (for living) and thus transformed the culture of an entire Vosges Valley in a decade. He persuaded the peasants to build their own roads, reform agriculture, build better cottages and barns, revive arts and crafts, establish a library, local schools and a nursery school. He received many honors for his work and Oberlin College in Ohio was named after him.

Borsodi also cited Dr. J. J. Tomkins in Nova Scotia who created a school for his parishioners to help them to learn self-reliance: "Under the leadership of educators using adult education – and neither business nor government – as their means for organization

and implementation, these impoverished people became their own bankers, their own merchants, their own wholesale distributors of their produce; even their land developers and building contractors. They learned how to help themselves family by family and through cooperatives which they organized, group by group and community by community." Thus, Father Tomkins, with the help of educators who embraced his vision, "succeeded in revolutionizing the conditions of living of these remote victims of modern Commercialism and mis-education."

In China, Dr. James Yen, a product of China's literary aristocracy, set up adult educational schools in a remote province. Almost 500 local villages adopted the model and supported their schools on their own. Novelist Pearl S. Buck wrote:

> *"We realized that literacy alone was not enough. Literacy isn't education – it is only a tool for education, a means to the whole end. The people had to get an education which involved the whole of their life … not so much to fit them for life as to re-make life. Later … we tackled public health, agriculture, economics and local government."*

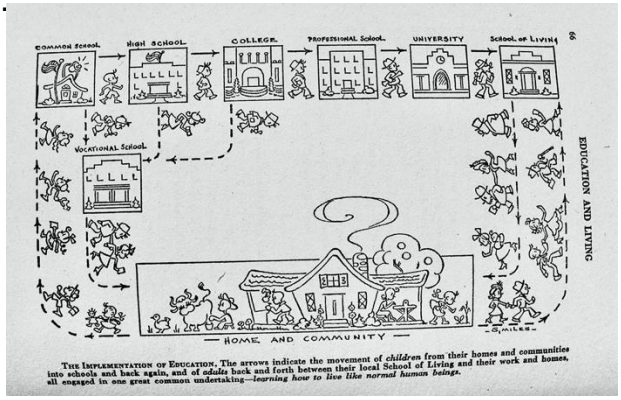
Yen told Buck that stopping at literacy, as Borsodi noted had happened in the US, "… would bring disaster. There begins the downfall of education. I say sometimes that non-education is better than mis-education. Now when these people want a better living and a better life, that is wholesome. But if you only instill into them a lot of new ideas and new desires and don't equip them with real knowledge or real skills to satisfy their new desires, then all you have done is to make a disturbance in the community of a very undesirable kind."

Yen did not seek to make the people different – the farmers remained farmers – but to help them achieve a better life.

The School of Living

Borsodi recounted that when he formed the School of Living in 1934 a few miles from the village of Suffern, New York, it "was intended to be, and still is, a research institution rather than a school pure and simple." It is located only 35 minutes from New York City and many of the hundreds of people who have attended the School of Living came from the City "and other centers of urban mis-education." The School of Living reshaped the lives of many who attended. It "changed their values, their habits, their ideas …. The idea of co-operative land acquisition has brought together whole groups of people who otherwise could not, or would not, have dared to establish homesteads of their own." It helped people born and raised in the city to learn not only the skills but also gain the understanding to pursue self-determined lives.

It takes a School in each community, with proper leadership, to guide adult education. Borsodi presented an image of the educational process that included all traditional forms of education from common schools to vocational schools to universities and professional schools. All of these programs serve the community. Before and after the formal educational process is the



THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EDUCATION. The arrows indicate the movement of *children* from their homes and communities into schools and back again, and of *adults* back and forth between their local School of Living and their work and homes, all engaged in one great common undertaking—*learning how to live like normal human beings.*

School of Living. It shapes the community. It provides the final stage of education for the university/professional school graduate and prepares them for leadership in their community. And, of greatest importance, it provides life-long learning for the community. Whatever their level of attainment in this system, all are "engaged in one great, common undertaking – utilizing the accumulated knowledge and wisdom of mankind in learning how to live."

Realistically, Borsodi reflected, the state of the academy, and of the professions, can be "mediocre and visionless"; however, "It is not what they are at present that counts. It is not the feeble light that flickers in their heart at present which is important. It is what the best of them already are and what the poorest of them might be led to make of themselves which counts. … If they [the educated minority] cannot discharge this responsibility, then nobody can."

Borsodi suggested a reorientation of the university. He suggested they become economically independent, regional institutions. In 1942 Borsodi had developed such a model for St. John's College. He envisioned that, instead of launching the young into a chaotic commercial world of some distant city, they return home to serve, stay connected to the university, form a university extension program and bring that institution into the direct service of local communities. These regional universities would be governed by the men and women who graduate from them. Quoting James Creece to support his case, Borsodi described "a self-governing association of men for the purpose of study; an institution privileged by the state for the guidance of the people; an agency recognized by the people for resolving the problems of civilization."

Juvenile Education

While Borsodi's system was for adult education, he wrote extensively about the education of the young. He considered juvenile and adult learning two distinct systems of education. Some juvenile education can be conducted in schools, much of it outside the classroom. In *Education and Living* he covered four age spans from birth to age 20 and a chapter that further developed his early adult education model as introduced just above.

The First Six Years – Character building.

The first six years of education occur in the home.

Characteristically, Borsodi provides a description of a range of methods of instruction that have been used throughout history. The first of these is the authoritarian method, i.e., drill sergeants and military schools (Borsodi did in fact attend a military school while young). This method is of value, he wrote, in conditioning the student to adopt certain habits such as cleanliness, self-awareness and safety, and behavior (courtesy and consideration, etc.).

The second is the perceptual method, or learning by comprehension. Perception is the use of the senses. This is a universal style and can be applied systematically in learning things like colors, musical scales and other things that rely on the senses.

The experiential method is learning from discovery. It comes from reflection on experience, including reading. It is the foundation of self-instruction.

The final method is example, learning from imitation and practice. The family and the teacher are early exemplars of behavior which the young automatically mimic. The foundation for character is, of course, the home – in what Comenius called the "mother's school." Most of the basics, including the beginnings of reading and writing, science and culture, history, arithmetic, music, domestic economy (Borsodi provided a long list) are taught in the mother's school.

Much of our character is fixed in these first six years at home. Borsodi had doubts that a normal home environment could be found in the city. Again, he put a great deal of stress on what he considered "normal," which is optimal.

During the early years the emotional character of the person is formed. There is physical contact with mother and other members of the family, a sense of belonging, of being loved and of returning love. We know, since at least Freud, that the roots of abnormal behavior are often due to the experiences of childhood.

It is in the home that not only the virtues but also the love of virtue is cultivated. Borsodi listed virtues including: Cleanliness, dutifulness and filial obedience, good faith and loyalty, prudence, cooperation, diligence, punctuality, tolerance, patriotism, initiative, sympathy and veracity.

It is in the home that habits are cultivated including hygienic habits, occupational habits, fundamental skills such as walking, sitting, standing and posture; speaking, counting, drawing, use of toys, appliances and implements; crossing roads, handling animals, plants and the soil; and minimum standards of good taste in food, clothing, furniture, decoration, and works of art and craft.

It is during the early years at home that social behavior is learned – associating with other children, adults, the elderly, various groups; learning respect and civic obligations.

It is in the home that basic beliefs and common lore are learned. These beliefs shape our relationship to our world, to plants and animals and the earth and cosmos; to institutions such as the home, family, community and state, school and church; money business, agriculture, industry, etc.

Rural or urban? The countryside and the city shape us in different ways. The transition from rural to urban had a tremendous impact on educational theory. In the city is both diversity and centralization. Schooling is standardized. Pressure is exerted to conform to patterns defined by the built environment. There is a disconnect with the natural order of life. It is harder to maintain a strong family identity in dense populations (although ethnic neighborhoods did play a large role in forming communal character). In the city we "are driven to escape into atomistic urban isolation."

From Six to Twelve – Introduction to Learning

The role of the common school is to continue the education of the child. It provides services beyond the function of the family, particularly disciplined learning. It is in the school that the young learn "history and geography, the arts and sciences" in depth. The danger, of course, is that the school can usurp the role of the family. This is to be avoided. The common school is not a cloister. It is a part of the community. It is embedded in the layers of education Borsodi described in his diagram above. In a small community, it may

be located in the same building as the school of living. Indeed, the community should be planned architecturally to integrate its various core activities. It is in a sense a folk school. In contrast is the rootless urbanite.

In the common school, students learn to master "three instruments of civilization:" language, numbers and graphics. These are the symbolic disciplines. These are the tools for communicating knowledge. With a mastery of these skills" they can matriculate in the great school called civilization, the faculty of which includes the greatest writers, the greatest artists, the greatest scientists, and the greatest teachers of all time." Borsodi stressed that the objective is not the lowest common denominator of the urban school but the elevation of each student according to their ability.

There is a vocational component to Borsodi's model. By the tenth grade all children can learn a vocation. Common school is not just abstract learning but learning to live in the world, to produce things, by working, by mastery of craftsmanship. There are those who will move on to college and those who will choose vocations. Both are of equal value and dignity. Borsodi considered it a crime that a farmer or blue-collar worker should be considered inferior to those working in city jobs, even teaching. Both the professional and the craftsman will enter the school of living and share a lifetime of learning and association.

From Twelve to Sixteen – Preparation for Work

Borsodi went into greater depth concerning the function of the vocational school.

Learning to work begins early and at home. Borsodi's objectives included reviving local "agriculture, home life and the social and economic life of the smaller communities of the nation." A vocation includes every occupation. It is not necessarily about earning a living; about earning money. Borsodi explained that "vocation" means "calling." Some vocations are commercial, some non-commercial (such as the family) and some a mix. There are four main categories.

The first, and in Borsodi's opinion, the most important, and the largest non-commercial and non-monetary vocation is the family – homemaking and motherhood. It is held in low esteem in our industrialized society. This form of vocation is exclusively non-commercial.

Following are husbandry and the professions, either commercial or non-commercial. Borsodi stressed that non-commercial vocations are not "business" – not for the sole purpose of making money; they are a way of life, a calling, an ethos. Farming is such a vocation. Indeed, he noted, many students in professional schools have not "found themselves." There are many who study law, medicine, theology, and education who have no natural aptitude for the work.

At root, trade and commerce are essential to human community. They represent an economy. A natural ecosystem is an economy; human economy should also be natural. Both words share the root "eco," which means "home." "Economy" originally applied to households, and the home is the primary productive unit in Borsodi's model. In an agrarian society most people are producers.

The home is the foundation of Borsodi's view of society. Whatever the day job, every home should have an efficient kitchen and workshop. Men particularly should be skilled in

making and repairing things, from furniture and appliances to automobiles and farm machinery. The gender roles are not exclusive. Men can work in the kitchen, clean the home and tend children. Both men and women can make and build, run a loom, build new things and repair things broken. The entire family is part of the family enterprise, and everyone works outdoors to produce food and maintain the homestead.

There is also an important role for art. Art and craft are hand and glove. Art is an expression of skill that results in beauty. Crafts and trades can be, and many have been, raised to a very high artistic level, for example the Medieval craft guilds and the arts and crafts movement as expressed by John Ruskin and William Morris in England and Elbert Hubbard and Gustav Stickley in America.

Finally, there is business which is all about making money. Borsodi noted that work for the sake of money has across much of history been held in contempt. Today business has climbed to the peak of the vocations. It is a product of modern industrialism where the objective is too often just a fast buck; ethics be damned. Whereas, the local economy is trade and barter' people work out the value of things themselves.

From Sixteen to Twenty – Vision

Moving from the common school to the high school and college, the common school provides the basic skills, and the higher schools are about vision – the possibilities of life and living – and a philosophy of life. It is about a humane purpose in life. The city school teaches conformity. The normal school teaches thinking, inquiry and choice, about the nature of life, about family, community and the broader social world. Without vision, Borsodi writes, quoting Proverbs 29:18, "the people perish." Without vision the young "stagger" through life. Borsodi wrote of his model that: "It might really produce a generation of mature and genuinely 'free' men and women – fit for political and economic freedom because they have been freed from both the vulgar superstitions of the past and the even more vulgar predilection for the material satisfactions of industrial civilization."

After Twenty – Mastery

Mastery is the product of practice, of perfecting what one does, be it vocational or professional. It is about developing skill and an attitude of perfecting one's self. The professions are a path of mastery. It is about perfecting service rather than seeking wealth. It is about forming a fellowship of practitioners who promote a higher standard of quality and service. It is about keeping abreast of one's field. There is no graduation: the "diploma would in effect be his certificate of admission to fellowship," a fellowship of continuous learning. For Borsodi the professional association, and not some bureaucratic board, would certify its own members to practice, and monitor them. The objective of the profession is to serve to normalize life and society, to make it humane, optimize life and society.

Part II – Mis-Education

Borsodi was highly critical of public education at all levels. He admired certain educators including Harvard's Elliot, Chicago's Hutchins, and St. John's College leaders, but these were the rare exceptions. His critique of schools, colleges and universities came down to three issues:

1. Education had become highly centralized; cookie-cutter, one-size fits all.

2. It was fragmented and compartmentalized.
3. It was abstract and not practical and hands-one, in short not about living.

Most of that critique focuses on the problems of the centralization of industry, the economy, politics and education. The solution is decentralization.

Borsodi then defined decentralization in these terms: "Decentralization … is not merely the opposite of Centralization; it is not merely the negation of Centralization. It is a positive process." As he described it, decentralization is communitarian, cooperative, provides local autonomy in the governance of affairs and promotes personal freedom. Borsodi's decentralization is not a political model at all. It is first and foremost a model for development of human potential. The means to that end is education. We need not a new state but a new state of mind.

Education, Borsodi again stressed, must become society's dominant institution. And it must be a local, not a national, or even a state, enterprise. He wrote (and this is a theme that can be found in George's *Progress and Poverty*): "Civilization will only be saved if we turn for guidance to the accumulated knowledge and wisdom of mankind, and insist that the teachers and leaders of mankind do the job which they really should be doing – teaching mankind how to live."[41]

I am not going deeply into Borsodi's critique of education. He wasn't the first to be critical of modern, "progressive," education and he was by no means the last. To make sense of that would require a 60-year update of that critique. *Education and Living* is more about Borsodi's solution than his problem statement, and that solution, I would argue, is still valid.

Volume II

The major theme of *Education and Living* was the question: "What is the goal of education and what is the role of the teacher?" Borsodi left no doubt as to the answer. He wrote, "education is to guide people in how to live well." He insisted that '[t]he true role of the teacher is to seek and teach the truth – to guide old and young in the art of living intelligently, healthfully and tastefully, and in the art of organizing all social, political and economic institutions so that it is possible for all people to live that way."[42] "Education must help determine and shape culture."

It is evident that Borsodi was strongly influenced by the educational philosophy of Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson believed that democracy could only work if the citizens were literate and well informed. Jefferson also firmly believed in small-scale, decentralized society, and he was a champion of personal independence.

The roots of Borsodi's educational philosophy are in his own personal sense of independence and his self-education. His Borsodi's aversion to public schools is evidenced in homeschooling his two sons during the 1920s. In *Flight from the City*, he described how he and Myrtle Mae developed a generalist, non-specialized, curriculum for them in order to develop an attitude that education is life-long learning for living.

[41] This is a theme amplified in the work of Borsodi's contemporary Alfred Korzybski: http://korzybskiinstitute.blogspot.com.
[42] I can think of no better mission statement for the School of Living.

One of the key elements of Borsodi's critique was specialization. We should understand that specialization is a rather recent historic trend, a product of the acceleration of the expansion of knowledge. Even into the nineteenth century there were only three basic professions: Law, medicine and theology. We could add military leadership and, towards the end of that century, business management.

With the twentieth century, specialization proliferated. Our modern college curriculum was taking shape; colleges developed departments for each field of knowledge and universities collected these departments into colleges. At that time many students were studying in Europe, and particularly in Germany, where academic departments such as economics, sociology, political science, philosophy, psychology by the end of the century, the sciences, as was as law, medicine and theology had been created. American students studying in Europe brought this model home.

The US land grant colleges had made agriculture a specialty, and all levels of education were being geared to prepare students for jobs. Education became increasingly centralized, standardized, and regulated creating uniform curricula. Commerce and industry were asserting powerful influence; businesses demanded employees who could perform specialized tasks. Liberal education, designed to develop character and critical thinking, was fast fading from the scene. The trend accelerated after World War II, in no small part driven by the G.I. Bill. The quantity mind was becoming increasingly dominant. Fewer and fewer people are trained to see how things are connected[43].

Before the modern age, education was the foundation for preparing (mostly) men for life in society. Since the Middle Ages learning was founded on the seven liberal arts. Education consisted largely of the "classics," often in the original languages (Greek and Latin, and Hebrew for students of theology), and a familiarity with literature. Those "well-bred people", people of good tastes, that is educated people, were expected to be conversant about great ideas. This gave them a common language and a common understanding of the human condition.

In the nineteenth century (and well into the twentieth) literature included both social and political philosophy, and natural philosophy, what we call science today, was a popular subject. Jefferson and Franklin were both adept in natural philosophy. The works of Adam Smith and other early economists were widely read as literature. Even Darwin was considered required reading. The list included Emerson, Thoreau, Whiteman, Melville, Hawthorne and other American notables. It included poets and notably the great English poets. The so-called "Renaissance man" had encyclopedic knowledge. A comprehensive library, however, could be had in a few hundred books. The fabulous 1911, 32 volume, *Encyclopedia Britannica*, was the masterwork of human knowledge that thoroughly described human civilization. It barely included then emerging technology such as the automobile and airplane. There is no mention of radio or wireless communication (there is an article about radioactivity). But it has been said that if you had the need and had no other books, you could build, or rebuild, a great civilization with this set of volumes.

[43] General systems theory was developed in the 1950s (and Borsodi was a precursor of this framework) to address the problem of the fragmentation of knowledge and especially of academic and professional specialization.

Over the course of the late nineteenth century, natural philosophy evolved into chemistry, physics, biology and other fields. Mechanics became engineering – a wide variety of specialized fields. Power printing multiplied the number of specialized books and journals. As knowledge exploded it became increasingly compartmentalized. The Dewey Decimal and Library of Congress classification systems were developed to organize this vast flood of diverse printed material. Each field tended to develop its own jargon. When I was in graduate school, there were at least 28 recognized special schools in the field of sociology, all fiercely competing for limited resources. I should also note that while Borsodi championed Harvard's President Elliot, it was Elliot who advocated the elective system of education that steadily eroded the classical, or liberal education

Borsodi understood the benefit of specialization. He considered himself a specialist first in economics and then in education. But he knew that the loss of a broad, humanistic, education, a holistic understanding of the human condition, deprived us of our essential humanity. He is by no means alone in this criticism.

By working through the major problems of living, by consulting the accumulated wisdom of humankind, by becoming informed and thoughtful, by seeing the big picture and the long view, we can achieve a capacity to comprehend and take appropriate and effective action.

The second volume of Education and Living is chiefly devoted to defining what Borsodi called "normal" living. Again, by normal he didn't mean average; he meant optimal. Right education has the objective of "Humanization of Man." Implementation of right education means the achievement of goals and Borsodi went to considerable length to define this. I will summarize these very briefly.

Part III: Right-Education

Chapter VIII, Right-Education: The Humanization of Man

Education is not just schooling but "all the influences which lead to the acquisition of the characteristics which man displays in the course of living." It is about the ideas we learn.

Mis-education is "any process of education which produces human beings who behave in an abnormal, animal-like manner." Mis-education is about ideas "which cannot be rationally validated." Modern man is conditioned to behave abnormally. We are brought up, in the home, school and even colleges, to conform, not think and choose. As traditions fade, the mass media increasingly shapes what we think we know. We buy into fad and fashion. Industry defines the scope of our behavior.

With neither tradition nor modern indoctrination as options, what do we do? As society becomes increasingly unstable, people seek alternatives. Many seek social reform – changes in social and political institutions. Borsodi sided with Tolstoy in the belief that efforts to reform society "are not only worthless but often harmful." It is not society that needs changing, it is what individuals understand about life and living.

"Right-education is that education which results in the acquisition by human beings of characteristics which lead them to act individually and as members of groups, like

normal [optimal] human beings." It is about personal choice, rational and reflectively chosen and implemented in pursuit of the good life. It includes an understanding that the prevailing forms of education, and mass-media indoctrination, are mis-education.

This brings us back to the list of universal problems of living. This framework gives us not only a list of defined problems but a collection of information about the various ideologies associated with each, a review of which gives us a range of options. Which do we choose? This brings us to the definition of normal living.

Chapter IX. The Ideology of Normal Living

"Normal" is about standards for how human beings should live. "Normal" does not mean traditional or average. It starts not with society but with the individual. What is a human being? We are born male and female. We pass through a sequence of developmental stages. Family and community require thoughtful definition. The scale of community is important, and small is generally considered to be better.

As with all animal species we must address the issues of survival and generation. But we are more than animals. The Law of Living for human beings also calls for expression: For the normal individual self-expression involves the utilization of his entire personality, integrally and harmoniously, to realize his utmost human potentialities[44] from birth to death. And this requires consultation with the accumulated knowledge of the human race.

> *"The man or woman who does not learn how to live normally; who does not observe the law of living in all three of its aspects, does not realize the full potentialities and creative possibilities of the human personality. The failure to realize these potentialities not only dooms the individual to dissatisfaction; it involves the substitution of frustration for satisfaction. Only by learning how to live normally in this full sense can modern man end the frustration to which his present devotion to the ideology of Progress and its implementation through Centralization, condemns him."*

The Definition of "Norm" and "Normal"

There are two forms of norms of living: Knowing what to do and doing it. Borsodi wrote: "All the conditions of man, both normal and abnormal, are the consequences of his actions. To this there are probably no exceptions."

Borsodi made clear that "norm" and "normal" should not be confused with concepts such as "natural, "average," customary," and "uniform." He defined each of these ideas to provide context. He also noted that while we must conform to natural laws, we are not merely animals; we have a higher set of standards of right and wrong, a higher level of understanding of the world in which we live. We must be careful about the artificial conditions we have imposed upon ourselves. While we consult culture – including custom and tradition – normal is not conformity. Normal is not defined by "standards" of uniformity. Normal is not average but rather lies outside of the "standard deviation" of the bell curve. It is exceptional, and it begins with questions.

A key distinction between normal and abnormal is that between satisfaction and frustration. Normal living presumes a state of satisfaction. Normal living is also

[44] Borsodi was a pioneer, along with his friends Aldous Huxley and Abraham Maslow, and with contemporary Alfred Korzybski, in the use of the term "human potentialities."

distinguished from mediocrity; indeed, it trends towards acquired genius, to creativity. The law of living is about self-expression.

The Problem of Method

The accumulated knowledge and wisdom of the human race, Borsodi believed, contained what we need to formulate the norms of living. Human nature has changed little, if at all, over the course of history: "All the major problems of living have been faced over and over again by the great minds of the past, and all the major solutions of the problems have been prescribed, and often tried over and over again, in the history of mankind." We need to digest knowledge rather than merely accumulate it. We have learned enough, he wrote, "to eliminate most of the serious pre-scientific errors of … the past." There is still, of course, much to be learned but our job is to use what we know rather than merely focus on gaining more knowledge. Which brings us to the problem of the method for evaluating, for digesting, what we have.

Borsodi proposed a triptych of methods: the deductive, the pragmatic, and the metric or homometric. We must use all three and by doing so we gain a geometric improvement in outcome. We use these methods to establish the validity of theory and practice. We use knowledge and method and action integrally. We have a broad array of knowledge including "history, biography, religion and philosophy, literature, poetry, music, the drama and the dance" which must be considered along with the scientific knowledge of biology and physics.

The basic drives are: hunger (self-preservation), sex (self-reproduction) and self. The first two drives we share with all animals. Only humans have the expressic instinct – or as Emerson put it, "an instinct for perfection." Only humans have abstract language. We have the capacity for artistry. Finally, only humans are able to express themselves possessively – in clothing, architecture, furnishing of the home. All three instincts are part of our being. Borsodi wrote, "No action is normal which precludes the harmonious satisfaction of all three of man's basic instinctual drives and basic norms." To which he added, "… only those acts and patterns of action which involve no frustration of the basic survival, sexual, and expressic instincts are normal."

The above was argued logically by the method of deduction. Normal living is pragmatic. As such it throws off convention and embraces an alternative lifestyle that works; that is, relatively free of frustration. The pragmatic method uses the test of how well our actions work in life. For example, our diet--the food we eat. Does it promote health and longevity, provide energy, digest properly? Then and now we know that processed foods are a health risk. As a result, digestive remedies occupy a lot of store shelf space. We can choose healthier foods.

The third method is homeotic, which is to say, "by the numbers," using statistics. Borsodi, as an economist, liked his facts and figures and he used them freely. You can lie with statistics – make them saying pretty much anything you like, and special interests, including advertisers, are good at massaging the numbers. They can also be used or refuted for purely ideological reasons. The studies of specialists can leave out a lot of important variables from other fields resulting in an incomplete presentation of things. We. must be

more exacting. Our facts need to be validated and put to the test. We need an adequate, holistic approach to metrics.

Chapter X. The Implementation of Normal Living

There are three parts to normal living, the individual, the family and the community. Normal living includes homesteading, decentralization and education. They represent not separate things but a continuum. Borsodi described each of these in some detail, but, as he clearly stated above, his work was not simply theoretical. His objective was to use the homestead, the ideal of a decentralized society and education to achieve normal living, what he considered the birthright of every human being. Throughout his life he organized and built things. He found land, constructed buildings and brought people together to learn the art and science of the Good Life. What he pursued were not ideals, but objectives, and he worked to help people achieve them.

Part I. The Normal Individual

We are biologically male and female and as such intended to live in union. While there are physical and mental differences between men and women, the idea that men are superior to women is a false ideology. But to fail to understand the biological differences between the sexes is also a mistake. We need to understand ourselves in terms of what nature has produced, not ideologies. In terms of education, we need to provide each individual with the knowledge and skills they need and want, not some generalized principle of instruction which disregards individual differences.

Borsodi addresses the difference between the sexes through the problem-centered framework, particularly the problem of association. He noted five alternative approaches to association: Authoritarian, fraternal, educational, co-ordinal and functional. He suggested a functional relationship between the sexes: "Their relationship with one another can therefore be normalized only by voluntary and co-operative division of their respective labors. If the rights and obligations of both sexes are to be observed in the manner in which men and women treat one another, their relationship must be complementary – from each according to ability, and to each according to need."

The Life-Cycle of the Individual

As previously suggested, there are stages in the lives of human beings. These stages are distinct in terms of biological, emotional, and intellectual characteristics. Borsodi defined nine ages of man:

1. Prenatal, the nine months from conception to birth
2. Infancy, three years from birth to age 3
3. Childhood, nine years from 3 to 12
4. Puberty, one year between age 11 and 16, average 13
5. Youth, twelve years from age 14 to 26
6. Majority, 15 years between 25 and 49
7. Maturity, 20 years between 40 and 60
8. Seniority, 20 years between 60 and 80
9. Senescence and Death, after age 80

Taken together, in sequence, they represent a Wheel of Life. The cycle of life involves the regeneration of the soil by returning to it what is taken out of it by decomposition and recompositing. Our bodies are formed from what comes out of the soil, our waste and finally our bodies go back into the soil. It is thus essential to consider the land upon which we live as a whole system and one which must be maintained in harmonic balance. "All the activities which in any manner affect health must be evaluated, properly practiced and adapted to one another if good, or abandoned if injurious." This includes "proper breathing, proper clothing and shelter, proper sun, air and water bathing, proper posture and exercise, proper intercourse and proper thinking and feeling."

Each stage of life must be normalized. Borsodi emphasized balance and harmony. It is about a balance of body, mind and emotions. Parents, as adults, can be better educated to help their children through the early stages of life. Teachers need an adequate understanding of the needs of children and youth as they progress through life. Individualized, rather than generalized, principles and standardized teaching is required. The young are incorporated into the community and perform productive work according to their ability. At puberty, they become ready to bring up their own young into a normal state of life.

Borsodi believed that youth, age 16 to 26, is one of the least understood parts of the lifecycle. It is a period of maturation. He held that it should be part of the life of the family and the community. It is not a time to go away to school but of engagement, of beginning a productive life.

From the time the child begins to learn formally, the matter of education becomes one of great importance. Youth, he wrote, need inspiration as much as knowledge. This can take many forms, including travel, theater, concerts, museums, libraries, literature, drama and art, but above all an understanding of the problems of living. "Right-education during this period should endow the young with vision, with inspiration for creative work and play, and with a passion for truth and beauty and goodness."

It is during youth that young men and women form their own families. Education should seek to normalize this relationship, this institution. Family, learning, productive work, and community engagement are integral. Borsodi, it should be noted, placed considerable emphasis on genetics, or rather eugenics. Procreation is a responsibility. It is about making good choices. The number of children and the quality of their lives is paramount.

Majority begins at the end of the rapid burst of physical and mental maturation of youth. At the time the legal age of maturity was 21; a merely arbitrary standard. Borsodi believed age 25 was more realistic. Majority is a period of "relative physical and intellectual stability." It is still a time of mental flexibility, of adaptability. It is a period of material concern, of supporting oneself and one's family.

In what is often called the middle years, we mature. Borsodi defined maturity as the time when "fascination with the novelties of life begins to change into awareness of their recurrence." It is about the time we become grandparents. "The enduring values of life must take primacy." And yes, physical, and possibly mental, decline begins. There is, ideally, a displacement from egocentric to a broader concern for others. With increased

experience and skills, and declining focus on self-satisfaction, comes an increase in productivity and the ability to deal with other people.

Seniority usually begins with a marked decline in psychical and mental energy. A deepening understanding of life, of wisdom, may be achieved in later years, as long as memory is sound. Borsodi wrote: "The use of this wisdom should be the characteristic distinction of seniority."

Senescence and senility are not the same. As long as the light of reason shines in the eyes, that meaning and purpose are felt in life, we age gracefully. We have many examples of productive lives beyond 80. The life normally lived could probably extend beyond 100 years, and a useful and happy life can continue until death comes. Borsodi remained productive as he approached age 90 and in her 80s Mildred Loomis was still working to create a School of Living network. Indeed, the vitality of the School did not die until she did.

The Accumulation of Wisdom

With the inevitability of death comes the question of its meaning. Is death going to sleep never to awaken? Is there conscious life after death? Does the spirit that animates us during life return to its original state? Borsodi was apparently not a man of faith. He wrote:

> *Such inquiry, it seems to me, points to some such norm as this: Action here and now is the only thing which really counts. It is what to do here and now about this life which is our proper concern. If the manner in which we deal with each problem which confronts us here and now is the manner in which it is normal for human beings to deal with them, we shall not only enjoy all our rights and fulfill all our obligations to the past but to the future and to the eternal and absolute, whatever that may be.*

And this leads us to one of the most important questions about human life, the continuity of consciousness. We each have two dates: the day we are born and the day we die. Only humans are aware of death; we have developed elaborate beliefs and rituals about death. Whether there is a conscious existence beyond death or not, there is the question of the continuance of human culture – what we pass from generation to generation. Borsodi framed this conclusion with this thought:

> *"It is impossible to dispose of any very important problem humanly without asking four questions: What have we inherited from our ancestors which must be taken into account in present behavior? What has posterity the right to inherit which we must provide in the present? What do we owe the living? Finally, what do we owe ourselves as individuals after having taken into account what we have received from the past, what we are receiving in the present, and what everybody receives as they enter upon the future?*

There is a universal pattern in life. This is what we call a "problem." As each generation learns, it passes on its experience, its solutions to the problems of life, to the next. There is something of a chain of being here, of:

> *"… great humanists like Aristotle, and Confucius, and Mencius, and Cicero, and Shakespeare, and Voltaire, and Goethe, and John Stuart Mill, and Jefferson, and Lincoln; …to all the leaders and teachers of mankind, not only humanist and philosophic but also materialist and scientific, religious and artistic; and even to the masses of primitive and civilized mankind with their common lore and tradition wisdom, for light; testing rationally and by scientific method what we find in each and find anywhere applicable to each problem with which life confronts us.*

It should be clearly understood that while we have that accumulated knowledge, there is no fixed answer to any problem. Each must be addressed on its own terms. We learn from the past but we life now.

Function and Organization

Normal living is a program of action, of function and organization. It is about purpose. Purpose may be functional, or non-functional, "in accordance with whether or not the acts performed and the ends which individuals seek to attain are essential to the existence, to the continuance, and to the characteristic form of action or expression of both the specific organs of human beings and of human beings as a whole." For example, eating is essential but eating for pleasure and without regard to health and nutrition is non-functional.

Normal living is balanced living. "Normal Living is impossible unless there is harmonic fulfillment of all the major functions of man." There is a penalty for disregarding any major human function--self-preservation, self-reproduction, and self-expression.

We need not only purpose but also organization and method to fulfill them. "The essence of organization is time; the occupation of time; the planning of the spending of time." The emphasis, again, is on living, on not wasting time. The bigger we get the more effort is required to organize not only time but space and material.

The Normal Family

In Borsodi's view, the isolated individual, living alone, is not a healthy state. The family is the foundation of society. The individual is a fractional and fragile organism who "can only complete himself and express his real potentialities through a hierarchy of relationships with other individuals." The most intimate of these relationships is the spouse, followed by close friends, members of the immediate family, members of a church, union, business/work, club or other association, people in the neighborhood, members of the community, individuals who constitute society or nation and finally with the larger circle of all races and nationalities.

Borsodi made a very clear case: "The primary problem of the individual today, if he is to live a normal life is … learning how to live normally either in the family in which he was born, in some family which he, or she, joins, or in some family which they help establish." And the family today, he wrote, is far from normal. The institution of the family in modern society has disintegrated and "as the family disintegrates, man himself is degenerating" citing "statistics of modern dependency and delinquency, of modern neurosis, insanity and suicide."

Borsodi defined the family not as a household but as a continuum; an institution that continues through time. We might call it an "architype," or what Fuller called a "pattern integrity." Borsodi said the family is a corporate entity, an artificial person of which people are its agents and beneficiaries. In other words, the family persists through time, generation after generation. It is both a horizontal relationship of those currently in the family group and also vertically in relation to those dead and those yet to be born. He included a chart by Shirley Miles (who illustration *Education and Living*), a genealogical representation of ancestry and posterity (page 418).

A normal family group according to Borsodi, "as distinguished from a mere household" consists of:

1. A group living on the same homestead or estate; composed
2. Of a sufficiently large number of persons, of both sexes and all ages from infancy to old age, belonging to not less than three generations
3. Related to one another by kinship (consanguineously and genealogically, by law, agnatically by marriage or legally by adoption), or by vassalage, (as servant, lodger, or guest)
4. Equipped with a permanent and hereditable estate and homestead (land, buildings, furnishings, tools, machines, animals), consisting of all the room and things necessary to produce the group's most important needs and desires including that of privacy
5. Organized to associate together intimately
6. To work together on the maintenance of the homestead, and
7. To contribute severally to its support from their outside earnings
8. Conscious of the nature of the institution to which they belong, of the rights they enjoy – the right to whatever they may genuinely need and the family can furnish – to which they are entitled by virtue of membership in the group, and of their obligations to it in consideration of which they make such contributions to its life and for its support as they are capable of making.

Borsodi added that traditional patriarchal families, in which the woman is subordinate and denied proper education and other basic rights, is not normal. He went to some length to describe this problem.

It is clear that the chief characteristics of the family is the homestead. Borsodi saw little promise of family in the city, in an environment dominated by industry, and living in rented dwellings. The deplorable state of the family in urban environments supported his claim (not that it is appreciably better in rural environments today). In short, the normal family requires a different culture and a different social environment, which we will address later.

The Functions of the Family

Borsodi prefaced this discussion with a note about the organization of the family that in order to organize itself for normal living, reorganization – normalization – is needed:

1. It must be composed of a proper number and kind of persons
2. It must be properly managed
3. It must be properly equipped.

The family came into existence not as an arbitrary organization but because of what it proved capable of doing for its members. In short, it evolved naturally. Borsodi wrote that it satisfies eleven functions:

1. *Their needs for survival. Providing for the survival of its members constitutes what I think of as the family's maintenance function.*
2. *Their need of protection against the vicissitudes of life. Providing this protection constitutes what I shall call the family's security function.*

3. *Their need of tangible equipment for a start in life. Providing this constitutes what I think of as the endowment function of the family.*
4. *Their need of controlling their fellow members. Providing this constitutes what I consider the family's disciplinary function.*
5. *Their need of work. Providing this constitutes what I think of as the family's vocational function.*
6. *Their need of play and revival of their spirit. Providing this constitutes what I think the family's recreational function.*
7. *Their need of rest and recovery from exertion. Providing this constitutes what I think of as the family's recuperational function.*
8. *Their need of education. Providing this constitutes what I think of as the family's character-building function.*
9. *Their sexual and genetic needs. Providing this constitutes what I think can be most appropriately called the family's eugenic function.*
10. *Their need of love. Providing this constitutes what I think of as the family's erotic function.*
11. *Their need of association. Providing this constitutes what I think can best be called the family's harmonic function.*

Borsodi provided a more extended description of each of these functions. I should point out that he covered much of the ground Abraham Maslow would some years latter define as the hierarchy of needs. Personally, I think Borsodi had a much better practical understanding of the "lower" band, what Maslow called deficiency needs. Borsodi saw these in a much more positive light.

In terms of maintenance, what Borsodi describe as "survival" is more than just staying alive. It implies a quality of life consistent with the values of a community; with standards that give us human dignity. In the US and around the world, vast numbers of people live in poverty, many homeless and with food insecurity. How often is the organization of the family considered to be the remedy for this? But then, how do we achieve *normal* family organization? Does our society have such standards? Borsodi, as he had since organizing his homestead, and especially after founding the School of Living, insisted on the importance of the homesteads, where the family produced much of what it needed and also established a fitting quality of life.

Security applies to extraordinary events. This includes unemployment, illness, periods of pregnancy and child nurturing, death in the family or other separations, accidents and injuries, fires-floods-storms and such, and old age. Security is not only physical needs but a subjective feeling of adequacy. Security may be pursued personally and individual, by reliance on politics or institutions and through the family. The family has been a highly efficient means of achieving security through history, but this potential has steadily eroded since industrialism. The family today, wrote Borsodi, is a product of mis-education. Its deterioration is also a product of the state of our urban-industrial culture, assuming its roles such as childbirth in hospitals, social security, and old-age homes (we could add child-care and public schooling). The family as a functional institution could only be restored by re-education, by right education and that was a role for the School of Living.

The family carries the primary responsibility for the character of its members. Discipline is not a public responsibility. Reliance on public discipline marks the decline of both family and society. Corporal punishment is not a good solution. There are a variety of

means to encourage conformity to family values, etiquette and morality, which have been covered in the section above on individual development. Exemplary modeling is high on the list.

The family is a working unit, producing much of its own needs. Money is needed and can be gained through crafts and trades and outside employment (although a barter system is also a part of the School's community). There are a considerable range of skills involved in homesteading and a domestic economy, derived from vocational skills. At an appropriate age, children join the family work, learn skills, participate and enjoy the fruits of their labor. In earlier days, farmers in their 80s continued to work productively; as a member of the extended family they can produce and enjoy the benefits of contributing to the life of the family.

Borsodi was a pioneer in appreciating and utilizing appropriate technology, appliances, machines and tools that reduced drudgery and made work more pleasant. The objective is to live a satisfying life through enjoyable and fulfilling work. This is a dignified, and Normal, life.

As in that Bible verse, there is a time for everything, and in normal living there is a time for rest and recuperation; revival of body and spirit. There is time for good sleep, for bathing and washing, for rest, for reflection and for recreation. In traditional times the family would read aloud, join in worship, sing and make music and play games. Much time was spent out of doors. There were picnics, gatherings and festivals. In Medieval times, there were holidays and/or festivals on the average of every three days.

The family is an integral unit that shares a collective personality. It is about basic values – and Borsodi considers no other institution but the family can adequately convey values. It is more able to embrace the emotional nature than intellectual education. It instills and cultivates character – a quality that defines a civilized human being. But, in industrial society, the responsibility of developing character has shifted from the family to the state. This has proven to be far from the best interest of the individual, the family and to the state and society. In the extended family, character is an ongoing dynamic; it is life-long continued education, done consciously.

The family instills the attitude of loving kindness. There are a variety of forms of love in a family. They include to varying degrees the emotional relationship between husband and wife, members of the extended family, friends, neighbors, community, and the human race at large. In the absence of such bonds we often find depression, anti-social behavior, suicide, and other self-negating conduct. The family is the institution in which these bonds are established and nurtured.

The goal of the family is harmony. Society brings us a variety of antipathies and antagonisms including hostility towards strangers, domination, sibling antagonism, incest, mother-fixation and sexual adventure. We live in a society of jealousy, prejudices and petty grievances. These topics represent the sessions at the psychiatrist's office. They can also lead to criminal behavior. A normal family works to overcome these adversities – to nip them in the bud. It is a process of confronting issues and problem solving, of ongoing education and re-education within the family group.

For Borsodi, the benefits of the normal family or group can only be achieved by each member discharging their obligations to that collective, and he suggested something on the order of a bill of rights to help understand how we achieve them.

The Organization of the Family

Most of the activity of our daily lives is more or less organized which involves some thought and planning. It is mostly in forms that have evolved as tradition. It is intended to be orderly. Traditional forms of organization have, however proved to be increasingly inadequate. They were produced before the modern urban-industrial era. Accidental forms must be distinguished from deliberate forms of organization. We need more deliberately designed forms of social life.

Borsodi's family organization is planned as a group. It involves the composition of the family group, management and equipment. These are the first of nine planning steps defined by Borsodi which he intended to cover in greater depth in another volume:

1. Evaluation
2. Conception and formulation of purpose
3. Composition and personal organization
4. Saving
5. Equipment
6. Director or management
7. Production
8. Delivery
9. Consumption.

Composition

Composition has already been discussed above in the function of the family. Borsodi, characteristically, had a long list of the faults of abnormal families. He did so I believe for two reasons. The first was obviously to state the nature of the problem so that it could be solved. The second was to list all of the approaches to the problem drawn from the accumulative knowledge of the human race.

To start, traditionally "families" were part of a larger collective, an extended family such as a tribe or clan. That is too large for Borsodi. Such groups are rule bound, authoritarian and ill-disposed to the development of individual potential. The modern family, averaging 3.8 persons, is too small. Modern families also have a variety of forms which Borsodi considered less than optimum, such as broken families.

Borsodi then listed the defining criteria of a normal family:

- Given that the function of the family is to continue the human race, the minimum number of children must be three.
- The family group is three and perhaps four generations.
- Given absorption of realties from breaks of some kind, an extended family group might be eight to ten adults, three to eight children and a minimum of four sub-families. In short, a normal family could be composted of 13 to 23 related persons. The size of the family is limited by the size of the homestead that can support them adequately.

- One child will inherit the household and the entirety of the land.
- There is a suggestion that the voluntary association of the family, such as marriage and relatives, be by carful selection. Marriage is not a response merely of romantic engagement. It is undertaken deliberately and thoughtfully. Consideration should also be made regarding inheritable genetic risks.

Management

There is a science of business management but not for managing the family. Borsodi sought to meet this need.

There are, to start, five forms of management: authoritarian, functional, fraternal, educational and co-ordinal, and perhaps some combination of these systems. Traditionally family management has been authoritarian. Only functional, or cooperative, management, Borsodi believed, is applicable to normal family organization. Two reasons why: The family is composed of unequal individuals. Second, the family requires voluntary and loving cooperation.

Functional management includes five assumptions:

1. The family is in essence a corporate entity and must have a name, e.g. the Jones Family.
2. The family must have a permanent home address.
3. It assumes the family has a purpose essentially the same as the eleven functions and purposes already described
4. It assumes the perpetuity of the family, a generational extension.
5. It has a set of by-laws.

The leader of the family "directs not by exercising power but by exerting influence." There is an innate division of powers and responsibilities in the family, but it is natural to see one member at the center. The structure and operation of the family group is in large part determined by nature. Leaders are not chosen, they emerge. Decisions are by the family as a whole – each member has a voice. In a functional family, differences can be worked through. Borsodi completely rejected coercion in any form. A normal family is educated, informed, purposeful. Difficulties can arise. Lacking authority, there is no way to impose the will of the majority. However, should irreconcilable differences emerge, the solution may be a splitting of the family – someone leaves the group; by resignation, suspension or expulsion. Resignation often occurs when a member joins another family or starts a new one by marriage.

Income is not only money, but also goods and services supplied by the family members. The family does not preclude individuals from retaining earned income, but earnings are assumed to benefit the family. Those not earning outside income may receive allowances to meet both personal expenses and for discretionary spending. The family may also contribute to outside entities. Departing members may also receive endowments, trusts and dowries.

The family, not individuals, owns the property. Rather than inheritance, the family is, again, a corporation, and there are thus no estate sales. Where there is a tradition of generational ownership of a farm (and an example was given of German farmers), high

priority is given to preservation of land and buildings. These, it is clearly understood, will go to future members of the family. Which brings us to the question of durable and capital goods.

Equipment

The city family is equipped to live for the moment, which Borsodi did not consider normal living. He proposed a different approach to "equipment" is needed for normal living. Borsodi noted that Ruskin struggled with the definition of equipment and solved it by distinguishing between wealth and illth. Wealth is not the capital of the rich, it is the accumulation of real value. Ruskin, a socialist, coined the term "illth" to indicate the reverse, the pathology of wealth accumulated for its own sake, in short, predatory capitalism. Equipment includes a home, and a normal home, as is other equipment, is owned, not leased. Nor is it under mortgage. It also does not include that equipment obtained by credit and held in debt. This does not preclude buying on credit but only with the certainty of readily paying off the debt incurred.

Borsodi provided definitions of equipment. Some are of economic values, some of less tangible significance. They include:

- A shrine and sanctuary, which may be the outdoors, a grove, or indoors, a chapel; a place to gather for the important rites of passage of the family group. It is a place with symbolic importance, albeit not necessarily religious.
- Fields, woods and gardens; surrounded by growing things
- Animals, livestock and pets.
- Wells and water
- Music and musical instruments
- Books and magazines
- Objects of art – an appreciation of arts and crafts.
- Shops and studios to create esthetic and useful objects.
- Machinery and tools, for domestic and commercial use. The family should be well equipped with a wide variety of machines and appliances. This is something of a *Whole Earth Catalog* collection; some is for production, some for recreation.
- Storage facilities, including root cellars, dry storage, well-stocked pantries, barns, bins and cribs, and refrigerators and freezers.
- Current supplies: food, fuel, building materials, fabrics, spare parts, hardware, etc.
- A family surplus or reserve. This includes food, savings and perhaps most importantly working capital.
- Transportation. This may be personal or public transpiration.
- Dwellings for multiple generations of family, relatives/members and visitors. It may be a family compound.
- Land. It doesn't take a lot, but it needs to be sufficient, fertile and productive.

A final question for the family is where should they live? Humans are adaptable. We live in cities, towns, villages and on isolated properties. The answer to where to live a normal life is *rural*, the country life. Borsodi summarized: "Man, no matter how often he

has tried to urbanize himself, can only live like a normal human being in an essentially rural place of residence. The penalty for disregarding this norm is mass-frustration, cultural decadence and race suicide." Strong words. But it is only in a rural setting that the conditions can be met that Borsodi established for the normal family. It is only in these circumstances that we can live, as Thoreau did, deliberately. Or, as he warned, the alternative is a life of quiet (or not so quiet) desperation, of constant striving and stress and insecurity. Borsodi also drew on Buddha and Confucius for right living.

Borsodi concluded his discussion of the family with these lines:

> *"It is my conviction that there is literally overwhelming evidence indicating that of all the purposes which have justified individuals both in living and in dying – the love of truth, the love of justice, the love of beauty, the love of country, the love of God – none is more capable of vindicating the individual in his ceaseless struggle to live than love of family."*

The Normal Community

A normal family cannot thrive in an abnormal community. Either the home community must be normalized, or the family relocate. Since a community cannot be entirely insular, the job of normalization includes the larger world, indeed, all of it.

Borsodi makes an important distinction between a community and society. It is in large part scale: "Relative to his local community, the individual is a fraction of a group of people living on an area of land both of which are still concrete and comprehensive to him." In a society, say a city, the relationship is abstract and centralized. The individual is impersonalized, anonymous. The economics of a city is so complex that not even economists understand it. In a community, the economy is direct and personal. It is a basic function of that community and understood by all.

For Borsodi, "people and land are Siamese twins … they are actually inseparable." Human relationships are thus founded on dirt, the Earth. In the city, in society, relationships lack solid foundation. Instead of production, society operates on money, an abstraction. In society we are dependent, and that dependency produces insecurity.

What is the ideal density of a community? "The evidence," wrote Borsodi, "suggests that the norm would be that density which results in: (I) the most efficient use, cultivation and conservation of is natural resources, including all forms of land – agricultural land, forest, mineral land, site land and the waters of the area; in (II) maximizing the health of the population; in (III) the development of the highest plane of living the existing state of science makes possible; in (IV) permitting men and women to express their personalities most fully amid the widest diffusion and the greatest employment of art and craft."

Land must be made available in order to create an agrarian culture. Returning to Henry George, Borsodi argued that there is plenty of land around the world but that it has been pre-empted by speculators. One study he cited concluded that one-third of the farmland in the US could support over 200 million people, an average of 16 acres per family, depending on region and soil fertility. The Japanese and Chinese could support a family on two to three acres. That was the size Borsodi proposed for a family homestead, with a roughly equal size of shared commons.

Borsodi described the community is a (if not officially) corporate entity, an artificial person:

> *"Whenever and wherever you find a population unit which has (I) a name; which has both (II) members and (III) an area of land; which has (IV) both a center and its commuting region; which has (V) a common body of laws and conventions or ways in which people are supposed both to behave and not to behave; which has (VI) leaders; which has (VII) institutions which implement common and group purposes, and which has (VIII) definite function which it tries to fulfil, you have what I call a community."*

There are, of course, major differences between a normal and abnormal community. A normal community will have family homesteads and families will be an integral part of the community entity. Members of the community know each other. The land will be held in commonwealth, not privately. Homes and moveable goods will be privately held. The common rules are observed voluntarily. There is no centralized authority. Leadership is functional, not authoritarian. The purpose of the community is to enable all its members "to live like genuinely civilized human beings."

The Functions of the Community

Borsodi stated that there are seven functions that cannot be fulfilled by the individual alone; these are the functions of community. The functions of the community come under the category of Gregational problems of living. The norm is to rely on personal action to the extent possible, yet each community must fulfill seven gregational functions:

1. The police – defensive or martial – function.
2. The inspirational function
3. The economic function
4. The social function
5. The recreational and recuperational function
6. The public health function
7. The affiliation function

In relation to these functions, Borsodi offered additional considerations as follows. These were introduced by three prime considerations.

First, "No function should be socially or governmentally implemented if it can be fulfilled equally well by private action. Social institutions do not take over the functions of the family but provide services the person cannot. Schools, thus, are not for teaching the basics of character development – it is the family.

Even in the best community, there is some anti-social or criminal behavior. The police function is local or, where appropriate, regional.

Second, "No gregational function should be implemented by compulsion – by recourse to government – if any voluntary institution can be established by which it might be fulfilled."

Borsodi addressed the inspirational function, which includes vision and stimulus for action. It requires courage. Inspiration is not the function of institutions and organizations but comes from the members meeting together. This function includes art, music,

literature, festival, oration and community dialog in pursuit of the true, the good and the beautiful. Participation is voluntary.

Third, "No function is properly assigned to a larger population unit if it can possibly be fulfilled by a smaller one."

There are functions within a community that must be dealt with by the community as a whole, its economy, for example. The first of these is that the land must be held in commonwealth with each family securing rights to use the land. Second are those arrangements that facilitate trade such as a monetary system, a pricing system and a market, labor and wage system, utilities and transportation. Again, these are all localized functions managed by the community. It is a third economy, neither capitalism nor communism.

The community is the foundation of human association with one another; through regular meetings and social affairs. The central hub of the community, or region (see image below), with parks and markets, library, the School, meeting rooms, auditoriums and gyms, theaters, markets, shops, etc.; is a space for meeting and association. Clubs, societies and associations organize events and festivals. The communal space, and surrounding countryside, offer recreation and recuperation not only of a personal but social nature. This includes sports, poolrooms, eating and drinking places, forests and lakes and trails.

Public health has a communal dimension. This includes community water and sewage disposal. It addresses outbreaks of infectious diseases and epidemics and provides medical and surgical facilities (perhaps regionally).

Borsodi defined affiliation as a sense of our common humanity world around. This affiliation is from the bottom up, not top-down. It is voluntary. Borsodi wrote, "ultimate sovereignty should always remain in the face-to-face local group" but collaboration and cooperation are tools for establishing the larger common interest.

Of course, the achievement of these three considerations rest upon the shoulders of the normal person and normal family.

The Organization of the Community

The town is a universal expression of human association and organization. In America the basic unit of population is the township. Borsodi quoted de Tocqueville (*Democracy In America*, 1835): "The village or township is the only association which is so perfectly natural that wherever a number of men are collected it seems to constitute itself." The township is the "smallest division of community." De Tocqueville found the New England town ideal. In them he found a passion for liberty. They govern to suit themselves, discords are infrequent, the conduct of local business easy, the people politically well educated, there is no distinction of rank, and cooperation in local affairs.

Borsodi noted that the tradition of the town or village has roots in England and has been influenced by German settlers. Both had a strong sense of a place well demarked from the rest of the world called a town or "mark" – a collection of people who occupied a place, with a strong sense of identity to both the land and its people. There is a strong sense of the occupants' right to the land, land that has been held by families for centuries. When a

family line comes to an end, the village assigns the land to another of its members. It is a place of such a scale so as people may live harmoniously.

Borsodi firmly stressed that the land must be held in trust, in commonwealth. Henry George advocated that. Frank Lloyd Wright, a student of George, did similarly in his concept of Broadacres City, and Borsodi had already provided leadership in land trust (and would continue to do so).

How big is a town? The German mark and English town/manor/parish ran between 900 and 3,000 acres and between a dozen to 60 families – or 300–500 individuals. These numbers evolved spontaneously and should be considered a product of nature. There are well-defined patterns in the organization of a traditional community. Borsodi also takes note of trading areas. Traditionally there were markets and in the American horse-and-buggy era, towns, and markets were located within an hour or two buggy/wagon ride – some five to eight miles per hour. Towns then tended to be 12-15 miles apart. Town markets were visited weekly or monthly. Borsodi called this travel zone a commutation area. The most distant point people travel constitutes a boundary around the community: "The land within this natural boundary constitutes the community's actual area; the people living within it, the community's true population." Today, rural Walmarts are more like 25 miles apart.

I have written about the ideal numbers of human association elsewhere. British anthropologist Robin Dunbar established the number of association comfortable to the human nervous system at around 150. That is about the size of traditional villages and tribal groups. By extension, with connections to neighboring villages, the span of association is about 800. The ancient Greeks considered 10,000 to be the limit of a functional polis. Jefferson proposed wards (counties) of 50,000 people.

The American census divides rural from urban at 2,500 people – the small town. Borsodi's homesteading "colony" of 40 three generation families would run between 300 and 400. The drawing of an ideal community by Shirley Miles, below, has about 100 households, closer to 800–1,000 people (and I'm estimating that at about a half square mile). Regionally, they are closely connected like the squares of a checkerboard. Borsodi described a regional as something with a sufficient division of labor to provide services like a university, hospital, professional services, small manufacturing, etc. That would suggest a "township" of perhaps 150 to 250 square miles, depending on topography.

Cities are, of course, larger than towns, but the idea of a city has another important distinction. The town/community is a unity of center and outlaying region while the city has been separated from the region upon which it is depends for sustenance. The city is a parasite, exploiting its surrounds (now globally). Today, even a rural town can have a foodshed extending thousands of miles; it is no longer self-sufficient, no longer in any real sense a community.

Borsodi first discussed the essential functions of cities in *This Ugly Civilization* (1929). He observed that the city emerged as a spontaneous human institution. It must have served some purpose. Borsodi listed a number of these. First and foremost, it is a citadel, a refuge from attack. A temple was often found in the center of early cities. It serves as a marketplace. It hosts universities. It may become the capitol seat of a

government. It is a terminal for transportation, for railroads, and/or a harbor. It has warehouses, factories, banks. It is the home of the headquarters of a variety of types of organizations. It attracts spectacles. Most ancient cities had only a few thousand, or a few tens of thousands of inhabitants. Today cities are huge – some in the tens of millions. As we go down the list, more today than in 1948, we find cities no longer support most of these functions. The economies that maintained these large cities are gone. The factories moved to distant places. Many places in the US are rustbelts, economically distressed and shrinking.

In *Education and Living*, Borsodi considered that cities of around 25,000, none over 100,000, could provide all services not found in local communities and regions and draw its needs from the surrounding communities it serves. "The modern city must be reduced in size until it draws no more wealth – and no more population – from the region it serves than is necessary to fulfill the functions which alone justify its existence. Its normalization and humanization require decentralization."

A city, as defined by Borsodi, represents a region. A region is a collection of communities freely associating across a geographic area to share resources. Scottish pioneer town planner, Patrick Geddes, described regions in detail. Like Borsodi, he found them a potentially organic entity. Borsodi asserted that a region is not merely a vague abstract like society. He distinguished it from "the tragic absurdity of the concept of nation." Borsodi believed that nations are a cause of social disorder. They divide humanity into warring factions and require coercive power. In the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson proposed that we have the right to abolish or reorganize a nation that does not fulfill its function of the pursuit of life, liberty and happiness – or, in short, does not support normal living. Borsodi goes to some length describing the failings of collective power.

Composition of the Community

Membership applies to "those individuals in a community who have accepted responsibility for all of the community's vital activities." Membership, further, is composed of "families which both live there and have a permanent stake in the community's commonwealth – which have not only made their homes in the community but also own a homestead in it." Homesteading families must be a determining majority for a community to flourish. Those who are not members of family homesteads are not, thus, considered members of the community.

There must be a degree of homogeneity in a community – a common language, shared values, and a sense of collective identity. This does not mean ant-like conformity but rather a foundation of common interest. In a normal community, each individual is self-determining. It does not require racial uniformity. It does not require ideological or dogmatic uniformity. On the contrary, diversity is necessary for a resilient ecosystem. Bottom line, it requires a common commitment to the wellbeing of the community.

Every community must judge the qualification of its members. This includes recruitment of new members as well as maintenance. A community is not a mere aggregation but an organization of people living self-sufficiently on the land--homesteading families. Each adult member of these families has a vote in community affairs.

A community requires leadership: "No community can be normal; none can be as desirable a place in which to live as it might and should be, unless it contains a class of individuals notable for their vision and aspirations, and a class tough-minded enough to realize dreams and to make actualities out of their own and the community's ambitions." A community must have a plan. It must include a range of occupations; a doctor, a dentist and a representative of other professions, of craftspeople and shopkeepers who provide the daily necessities. It must meet the artistic and spiritual needs of its members as well as the material needs – "poets, musicians, dancers, dramatists, painters, sculptors and architects."

Management of the Community

There are two distinct levels of management:

1. Management of the community as a whole: "The leadership and harmonization of all the group and public activities of the people of a community," and
2. Management of the community's institutions, such as health and public safety, schools, businesses and farmers' organization, social clubs, etc.

Management is perhaps not the right word, as it is not about control. Leadership is a better term but in the sense of influence rather than directing. Borsodi described leadership styles: Military, clerical, business, government and education. He found only education as the appropriate leadership style for the community: "The norm is: the community's leading institution should be a school, (a School of Living in small, local communities; a University in all regional centers); its leaders, the community's real elite (its teachers in the inclusive sense in which I define them in the first part of this work); the method of leadership by this educated minority, persuasion." Educational leadership exemplifies the ideals of the community.

The areas requiring management include:

- Businesses, owned by individuals, not distant corporations, that work collaboratively rather than competitively
- Social services, non-profit enterprises, owned and operated by community members. This includes the School.
- Government; the coordination of social services, roads, utilities, and such. This involves some form of revenue (taxes or donations) to support these services.
- Finance (banking); again, locally owned institutions
- Land tenure

Institutions of the Community

A community must include *all* of the institutions needed to fulfill its functions: "By institutions I mean in almost every instance a combination of five things: (I) ideas about something which needs doing; (II) tangible things and natural resources which can be used to implement the ideas – land, buildings, machinery, tools, livestock, supplies, commodities, stocks of merchandise; (III) techniques for using the equipment and producing and distributing the goods, or furnishing the services, for which the idea calls; (IV) technically and professionally trained personnel; and (V) organizations which plan, finance, own and operate community institutions."

Borsodi gives special emphasis to schools. “Every community must have a full complement of schools; without schools for dealing with both adult and juvenile problems, a community is obviously incapable of fulfilling its inspiration functions.” There must be a substantial number of well-educated people in the community. Books and journals are useful, but a school is essential. It is the responsibility of families to form and support the School. It is they who run the school, not some government agency.

Following is a summary of Borsodi’s descriptions of these institutions.

I. Inspirational Institutions

School of Living – a university in extension; led by a full-time, professionally trained Dean and a panel of specialists or experienced masters in each profession and craft; sponsored by a Fellowship of men and women concerned with the normalization of living.

Common Schools, (preferably one in each neighborhood), and a high school, (preferably a folk school); staffed with professional teachers; managed by the faculty; sponsored by a local membership association.

Vocational Schools; preferably sponsored by organizations composed of men and women in the various vocations for which the young are preparing themselves.

Library and Museum; an institution preservative of all the arts and sciences.

Auditorium, with halls for lectures, meetings and conferences, and facilities for drama, concerts, dancing, broadcasting, etc.

Churches; priests, pastors, rabbis; congregations.

Newspapers; preferably more than one so as to give expression to more than one interpretation of events.

Literary, musical, dramatic, historic, scientific societies, etc., each of which would sponsor community activities in its own field.

Art Commission; (planning, zoning, appearance of both public and other structures, monuments, roads, parks, etc.).

II. Governmental Institutions

Town Hall; town meeting; public officials; police force; court, lawyers, and laws and ordinances.

Jail; preferably a mere house of detention.

Armory; militia.

Fire Department; preferably a volunteer fire company.

Highway Department; paved roads, sidewalks in town center.

Sanitation Department; garbage and sewage disposal system, preferably using a compost "factory" for waste disposal.

III. Social Institutions

Hotels; motor courts-rest houses for visitors and travelers.

Restaurants; bars, ice cream parlors, road houses.

Social Clubs; luncheon clubs, country clubs, fraternal lodges, women's, young women's, children's, men's, young men's organizations.

Public Comfort Stations.

IV. Economic Institutions

Enterprises preferably implemented competitively:

Factories, preferably for the finishing of the raw materials which are produced in the community on its farms and in its forests, mines and quarries, fisheries-creameries, canneries, abattoirs, etc.

Handcrafts; contractors and builders; carpentry and other wood· working shops; machine shops, smithies, and other metal-working shops; tailors, weavers, upholsterers, decorators; bakers, etc.

Retail Stores.

Enterprises preferably implemented cooperatively:

Land; business sites; home sites, (preferably subsistence homesteads for those mainly employed in business, industry and the professions) ; farm sites, (preferably family-sized); grazing sites, (preferably cooperatively managed); forest sites, for soil and water conservation, timber, fuel; park, camp, playground sites; mine and quarry sites; river, lake, ocean, harbor sites. The allocation, use and conservation of the community's land and natural resources might he assigned to a land authority and planning board which would fulfill functions now left to land-owners and speculators, real estate dealers, sub-dividers, boards of assessors, zoning boards, forestry departments, conservation departments, irrigation districts, and specifically in certain areas to the U. S. Reclamation Service, the Tennessee Valley Authority, Port of New York Authority, etc.

Banks; commercial, building and loan, consumer credit unions, depositors' checking, savings, bank-of-issue, (money).

Public Utilities; water supply, (for the town center only); gas; electricity, street cars, bus lines.

Post Office, telephone, telegraph, cable, radio companies.

Depots; railroad station, bus terminal, airport, harbor-wharfs, etc.

Produce and Farmers' Market-both wholesale and retail.

Fair Grounds; sheds, stables, tracks, etc., with seasonal fairs and regular market days sponsored by farmers' associations.

Public Storage; elevators, locker plants, etc.

Insurance; life, fire, health, accident, liability, etc.

Guilds; trade and manufacturers' associations; labor unions; farmers' associations, professional associations.

Arbitration Association.

Community Chest; for supporting charities and welfare agencies.

V. Recreational Institutions

Theatres and Concert Halls; theatrical companies, movies; "little theatres," amateur theatricals; operatic companies; orchestral, band, choral concerts; sponsored by drama and musical associations.

Play grounds; camp sites, picnic grounds; swimming, skating, boating, wading facilities; athletic fields, tennis courts, baseball grounds, golf courses, coasting, skiing and toboggan slides; parks, band stands, outdoor auditorium and theatre.

Festivals and Holidays; pageants, processions, fairs, folk dancing, folk singing.

Retreats; mountain, forest, seashore.

VI. Health Institutions

Health Center; health examination board; ante-natal, post-natal, birth control, sex instruction, marriage advisory, mothers', infant-welfare clinics; nursery school; immunization clinic, quarantine board; sanitation and hygienic inspection service; sponsored by a public health administration.

Hospital; rehabilitation clinic and service; trained nurses, mid-wives, physicians, dentists, oculists, etc., sponsored by local medical and hospital association.

Sanitariums; neurotic; tubercular, etc.: delinquent; degenerate, perverted, dependent, and poor.

Asylums; orphaned, old, feeble-minded, insane, crippled, blind, etc.

Cemeteries; mortuaries; crematoriums.

VII. Affiliation Institutions

Memberships in Clearing Houses and Central Banks by the community's banks, credit unions, building and loan associations, etc.

Memberships in Organized Central Markets by local elevators, cotton warehouses, cooperatives, brokers, etc., dealing in produce, grain, petroleum, coal, timber and other commodities.

Delegates from local fraternities, trade and professional associations, unions, political parties, etc., to state and national conventions.

Legislative Representatives; councilmen, county board members, assemblymen or legislators; congressmen and senators.

Family vs. Institution

Again, it must be made clear that Borsodi preferred the family as the foundation of a community. The list above is classically Borsodi; he tried to capture everything. These institutions, however, should be organized only where community members think they provide something their families cannot. This is covered more fully below.

Part IV: Re-Education

Re-education is about the normalization of humankind, "of first determining the proper ends and purposes to which human beings should devote their lives; secondly of instilling in them the desire to devote their lives to this newly defined objective; thirdly of supplying them with knowledge of how it is possible to achieve it, and finally of leading them to act in accordance with it." Individuals and families can be taught to solve their own problems and exercise initiative. It is adult education, about adult problems. It draws on the accumulated knowledge and wisdom of humankind. It is integral (and not specialized). Since we have been mis-educated, it is about re-education. It is about right-education.

Adult education is not delayed education. "True adult education must consist of a comprehensive program which aims to furnishing the responsible adult an adequate basis for (I) choosing among alternative ideologies those which are valid postulates of action; for (II) choosing the specific social, political and economic institutions which need to be established, reformed or abolished in order to implement ideas calling for group and public action; for (III) choosing means of implementing ideas which call for personal action; and for (IV) choosing leaders who are educators rather than power-seekers."

Above all, adult education is about personality and character-building. It motivates as well as informs. It is about "cultivation of the Holy Earth, to the organization of normal families and the creation of normal communities."

Schools of Living: The Organization of Re-Education

The School of Living is a new type of university intended to establish in every community a graduate school for adults, which would be "the central and most influential institution in each of the communities of the nation." It educates parents to bring up their own children to normal living and produces an educated minority—teachers – to guide the community.

Sinclair Lewis' *Mainstreet* depicted small towns starved for fellowship, lacking in spirt, without vision or plan, populated by two-legged animals infected with materialistic barbarism. The School of Living and the normal community restore these essentials. Small communities can be normalized. We must learn how to attract the attention of people in the community.

Human beings are endowed with imagination, memory, understanding. "They dream dreams and try to realize them." The School of Living is an institution to help each achieve their highest aspirations.

A School of Living is a fellowship united by a great idea about life here and now, which is "simply the teaching of normal living; the method of realizing it." This takes commitment, a vision of a better world, a decision to prepare, to learn from the accumulated wisdom of humankind, to solve the problems of living. The method is organized informal education. It doesn't happen in a classroom; it is for active people. It should involve festival. It's not about fear, sex, vanity and greed but "truth well-told." It is not zeal or bigotry but human and proportion. *Get their interest. Create a desire to live like normal human beings by moving people to action.*

It can start with a study group, affiliated with a "mother" School, for analyzing the 13 major problems of living and exploring the alternative solutions of each of them. The group raises funds to employ a trained leader (Deans in Schools of Living) "who devote themselves, apart from whatever time they spend in homesteading and housekeeping, primarily to the work of building and equipping the School, enlarging its membership, and completing its panel, so that the School might begin the work of normalizing their community." The School should be financially independent.

The School can finish basic studies, confer degrees of bachelor of living, master of living and doctor of living. It has a research library organized according to the major problems, and ideally it would employ a research librarian. It should have an extension relationship to a regional university (see Melbourne below). It should have its own impressive building, at the very center of the community, with meeting rooms, seminar rooms, office, library. A list of subject expertise to draw on includes:

- Philosopher
- Theologian
- Psychologist and Psychiatrist
- Sociologist and Social Worker
- Cultural Anthropologist
- Educational Scientist
- Public Relations Counsellor
- Poet-Orator-Writer
- Musician and Dance Master
- Painter and Sculptor
- Actor-Dramatist-Director
- Industrial Designer
- Hygienist
- Nutritionist and Biochemist
- Physician
- Sexual and Eugenic Scientist
- Population Scientist
- Historian
- Political Scientist
- Jurist and Attorney
- Criminologist and Penologist
- Police and Military Scientist
- Political Economist (Chrematistike)
- Home Economist (Oikonomikos)
- Agriculture and Forestry Scientist
- Financier and Banker
- Accountant (C.P.A.)
- Architect and Landscape Architect
- Appraiser
- Business Management Specialist
- Engineer
- Insurance and Investment Counsellor

The School should maintain a perpetual survey of people and land use in the community from which is drawn the community plan (as in Shirly Mile's drawings). The plan should extend to 100 years into the future.

The School provides three activities: "Instructional, which deals with the present; festal and commemorative which has its roots in the past; and inspiration, which looks to the future."

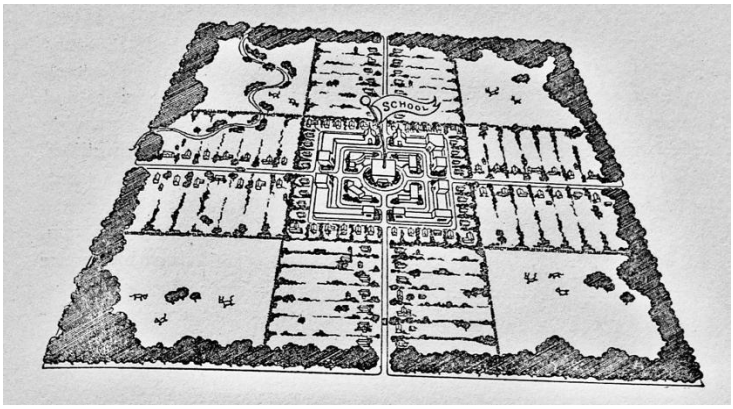
Challenge to the Teachers of Mankind.

Borsodi cited Robert M. Hutchins of the University of Chicago: "The crusade to which we are called …. is nothing less than to procure a moral, intellectual and spiritual revolution throughout the world. The whole scale of values by which our society lives must be reversed."

Borsodi, as noted, advocated leadership. He described six types of leaders: Religious, military, hereditary, business and, of greatest importance, educational, and he gave a long list of educational leaders from ancient to modern times. These are unofficial leaders who have no power or authority. They work by persuasion and influence, by learning and reason; they need no school or classroom; they are members of their community. They "must individually bear some share of the responsibility for the state of mankind." They must equip themselves to lead. The job is to build a new world, a new culture.

The School of Living Community

Borsodi asked Shirley Miles[45] to draw a diagram of a community equipped with all of the essential institutions.



Miles provided a bird's-eye view of a community as envisioned by Borsodi. Since we no longer have the institutions around which a successful community can be formed, the School of Living is the center of the homesteading community. Not a courthouse, not a church, but a school. This is not a school in any way like those then or today; and we've gone a long way downhill since. The School of Living is an institute, a locally managed learning program that seeks to bring out the best of our humanity, to promote strong families and communities. Borsodi was, of course, not alone in this hope. It has always been the foundation of what we call the American way of life, a free, democratic society of self-reliant people who govern their own affairs at a local level. A large literature on this issue was published during his lifetime (relatively little of late).

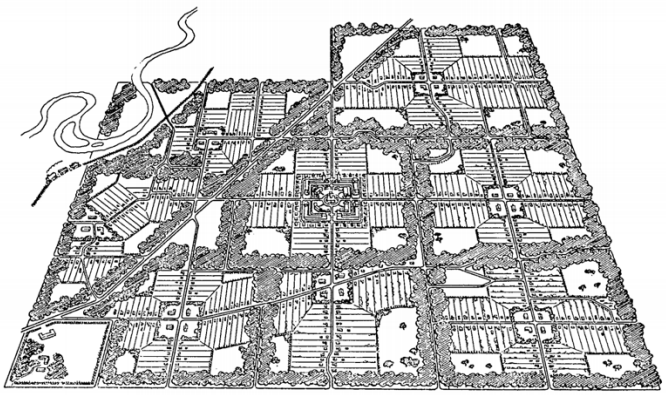
[45] Shirley Miles was a member of Liberty Homestead at Dayton and founder of Melbourne Village. She was, as the caption indicates, then homesteading in Ohio

Community was intended to be a major outcome of the School of Living. The School of Living would give organizational structure to a community of homesteaders. The School as depicted, is at the very center of the community. Miles listed a number of other features of the homesteading community drawn from her own small-town experience, mostly located in the community square surrounding the School:

Library and Museum
Common and High School
Vocational School
Auditorium
Churches
Hotel
Bank
Marketplace
Shops and Factories
Post Office, Bus Terminal

Town hall
Men's Club
Women's Club
Young Men's Club
Young Women's Club
Subsistence Homesteads
Family Farmsteads
Common Pasture
Town Forest and Forest Best.

Miles also provided this drawing of a cluster of communities. The one in the center has the school and houses community activities. The total population represented by this image would be less than 3,000 people. There is still only one School. While seemingly dense, although still probably less than one person per acre, it would allow the relocation of large populations away from cities. At worse, it is far better than suburban living.



DIAGRAMMIC suggestion for the "equipment" of a normal community. The diagram is based upon a study of Jefferson Township, in Montgomery County, Ohio, in which "Milestead," the homestead of Shirley Miles, the artist, is located.

Chapter 8
Melbourne

Turning Point

The years during and immediately following World War II were a major turning point for Borsodi. The war had brought the New Agrarian movement to a standstill. It had brought an end to the Bayard Lane community and the School headquarters building was sold. Operations of the School of Living had been transferred to Lane's End in Ohio. Mildred Loomis had taken the burden of daily management of the School of Living from his shoulders. Borsodi kept busy with his seminars and writing. He published his magnum opus, *Education and Living* in 1948. His beloved wife, Myrtle Mae died after a long battle with cancer in December 1949. And, there was a lot going on in Borsodi's life that was drawing him south to Florida. This move launched him on a new and dynamic mission.

India would also play a defining role in the development of Borsodi's work at this time. Shortly after moving to Florida, Borsodi and his new wife took a cruise to Asia. On returning he jumped into the University of Melbourne experiment. Borsodi published *The Challenge of Asia* in 1956 as a University of Melbourne publication. It gave perhaps the most comprehensive expression of the educational program he had been working to develop. Two years later he went back to India for an extended stay.

My two chapters on Melbourne and the university experiment, and India are complimentary. The program he developed at Melbourne was intended to serve both the East and the West. In this chapter, "Melbourne," I have extracted the last of four parts of *The Challenge of Asia* which describe the University of Melbourne program. In "India," I will outline the other part; his experience of the conditions of Asia. With his return to India, Borsodi brought the two streams back together and shaped his work until the end of his life.

Melbourne Village

Melbourne Village was formed by three women who had been associates of Borsodi's at Dayton, Virginia Wood, Elizabeth Nutting, and Margaret Hutchison. All three women acknowledged that they had been strongly influenced by Borsodi. Here are brief profiles of these three women.

Virginia Pierce Wood was born in 1888 on farmland near Dayton. She attended private school until her final three years. She said this education help her to learn to think for herself. She graduated from Smith College. She studied sociology and became interested in the problem of poverty. She worked a variety of volunteer post

Two weeks after finishing college she married General George Wood, a man 20 years older. Wood was born in Dayton and practiced law there. He enlisted in the army in 1898 for service in the Spanish-American war and rose from the ranks to a commission. He also served in the Philippines. He served as a colonel in Europe during World War I. Following the war, he served as Adjutant General of the Ohio National Guard. He also worked in veterans' affairs.

During World War I, Virginia served as a Red Cross volunteer and after the war became an increasingly influential leader in the community working with a variety of organizations and serving on the school board. During the Great Depression she was a member of the Community Chest and Council of Social Agencies; becoming involved in the city's welfare and philanthropic agencies.

Elizabeth Nutting's father was a professor at the University of Iowa. She was educated in the public-school system in Iowa City. She majored in English and natural history at the University of Iowa. She had an early passion for social reform and at church one morning decided that she "was going to fix up" the world.

Inspired by a lecture given by theologian and social reformer Graham Taylor at her high school, Elizabeth went to Chicago to work in Taylor's School of Civics and Philanthropy, specifically in his Chicago Commons Social Settlement where she saw urban poverty at its worse. She then went to Boston University's School of Religious Education and was the first woman to receive a doctorate in religious education there. She was then hired to teach religion in public schools in Dayton. Elizabeth joined the Council of Social Agencies in Dayton and became director of the Character Building Division, where she had her first contact with Virginia Wood

Margaret Hutchison was at Boston University with Elizabeth and joined her in Dayton. She was born in Cambridge; a small town in eastern Ohio. He father was in the wholesale grocery business and a deacon of the local Presbyterian Church. She attended Muskingum College in Ohio, majoring in economics and business administration with a minor in religious education. Along with Elizabeth Nutting, she received a master's degree in religious education at Boston University. In 1929 she attended Union Theological Seminary to study with Reinhold Niebuhr whose writings on urban ministry had inspired her.

Dayton was an eye-opener for Margaret. She had not experienced poverty on the scale she saw it in Dayton caused by the closure of a number of factories. The resulting squalor lead her to question the factory system. She was also unsettled by the lack of a sense of community; of the sense of "estrangement."

In the summer of 1932 Elizabeth Nutting organize "production units, … where the unemployed would produce food, clothing, and other essentials for their own use and for barter." There was a dozen of these units in Dayton involving between 350 and 500 families. According to this version of the story, the Council of Social Agencies asked Margaret to find someone who could offer expertise for developing the production units. A friend at Union Theological Seminary suggested Ralph Borsodi, and she contacted him. That story is told in the chapter "Dayton."

After World War II, Elizabeth Nutting began spending considerable time at Suffern attending Borsodi's seminars. She became committed to setting up a homesteading program along Borsodi's lines. She agreed that seeking government aid for Dayton was a mistake – that a private land trust was needed. At Suffern she met Norman Linington who was on the School of Living board. He sold real estate in Florida and convinced her to look at property there. She did and on returning to Dayton in 1946 she, Virginia Wood and Margaret Hutchinson founded the American Homesteading Foundation (AHF) to develop

Melbourne Village. It was incorporated in Ohio in May 1946. An organizational meeting was held in July 1946 at Virginia Wood's home in Dayton. About a dozen other people attended. Pierce Wood, a Dayton attorney was name legal adviser and Borsodi as a consultant.

Borsodi suggested they consult his friend Arthur Morgan at Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio. Morgan was a recognized leader in community development. Virginia and Elizabeth met with Morgan. He gave them advice on creating small communities. He suggested landscape architect Louise Odiorne. Odiorne was very interested in the project and agreed to undertake the planning of the first 80 acres in return for a membership and a lot. She drove to Melbourne in September 1946 to start the plan.

At the first AHF meeting bylaws were presented. The purpose of the project was:

> *"To establish homesteading groups and provide therewith opportunities for these and other groups to study the principles, practices and further possibilities of modern homesteading.*
>
> *"In furtherance thereof; it is proposed to buy, sell, mortgage, lease and otherwise deal in real and personal property; to establish and maintain schools; to publish relevant literature; and to do all other things necessary and convenient to the encompassments of the foregoing purpose.*

The bylaws made it clear that members of the community must support its mission.

Virginia Wood was clearly the driving force. She was a major financier of the original land purchase and of a number of projects and subsequent community needs. Nutting's idealism, Hutchison's organizational and business skills, Norman Lund's knowledge of the community, Odiorne's community planning skills and the countless hours of dedicated work by many others turned vision into reality.

Borsodi and his School of Living were on the AHF agenda. In late 1949 Margaret Hutchison described the Melbourne Village program "as a plan of action that would enable the villagers to help others as well as themselves in times of economic crisis, when growing food and bartering skills would serve as cushions." She added that Borsodi saw homesteading as a return to the "early American ideal of individual initiative and democracy" without any lowering of the standard of living."

Elizabeth's brother, Notre Dame professor Dr. Willis Nutting (see below) added his perspective on "Why We Homestead" at the first annual meeting of the AHF. From the minutes of that meeting we read that:

> *"He emphasized the values in this way of life for individual development, real and satisfying family life, and a richer and more stable community setup. He stressed the greater security families may enjoy when they live in their own homes where they can raise most of their own food the year round and where in case of depression, members of the community can barter their various skills, thus maintaining a high standard of living regardless of the value of the dollar. He also stressed the importance to our natural life, of a leavening of people who are independent and secure because, as he put it, 'Each would become increasingly his own boss.'"*

In Borsodi's own terms (from an interview September 3, 1956 – the 22nd anniversary of the founding of the School of Living in Suffern):

> *"The founders of Melbourne Village hoped to fulfill this ideal by having modern family homesteading in a small community with as much local government and jurisdiction as*

possible. Modern family homesteading implies several things: (1) The home and land is owned by the family and is of itself a basis of security. (2) The economic life is centered around the family as much as possible with commodities produced by the home for use of the home. (3) Modern machines, equipment and methods are used for production."

In another prospectus Borsodi laid out four principles for the new community:

- Real democracy, not just votes but "constructive group thinking and voluntary cooperation."
- Productive homes where families can produce much of their needs themselves. This was "early American independence."
- Development of people which places normal living above material means.
- An education-centered community "dedicated to the development of well-balanced effective human beings." It was intended to serve the needs of the villagers.

A brochure made it clear "that the purpose of Melbourne Village was not to subsist but to attain a higher standard of living, not to return to primitive living but, in the philosophy of Ralph Borsodi, to use modern technology with its time and labor-saving devices for more creative living."

The brochure also highlighted Florida's climate. It described Melbourne Homestead Village as "A beautiful Florida Shangri-la—Where There's Magic in the Good Earth." Its homesteading school offered "the thrill of independence and fuller self-expression in this unusual set up, where neighbors will be neighbors indeed, and where a community and family program of production for use can supplement even a small cash income to provide abundant living in good times—or bad. … where "members will have a share in the planning," a "democratic community where each Member has one vote." It would be just a great place to live. And as we see, that "great place" would be the undoing of the community vision.

The brochure went on to say that The American Homesteading Foundation was non-political and non-sectarian; "realists, with practical common sense, there must be; but not the disillusioned, not the fear-ridden nor the cynical." It would have all the amenities.

Borsodi and Arthur Morgan were clearly having a considerable impact on the development of Melbourne Village. The founders were motivated by an experience of the failure of modern industrial society. Elizabeth and Margaret were also strong motivated by the urban social ministry exemplified by Reinhold Niebuhr and Graham Taylor (Virginia Wood was not religious). There were also a number of Georgists and decentralist; many friends of Borsodi.

During the winter of 1947 – 48, the first of the homes were completed and occupied at Melbourne Village. Virginia Wood's home was the first completed. Within the first year, 32 memberships had been accepted and lots secured. Another 40 acres of land was acquired. In 1949 yet another 80 acres were acquired and in 1951 another 80, bringing the total to 280 acres with 375 house lots. In 1950 a Village Credit Union and Village Coop were established. By 1950 35 houses had been built and membership was up to 106. That year Borsodi personally contracted for 40 acres, the "Borsodi Forty." In 1952 there was a library.

There are several stories about how Borsodi met Clare Kittredge. In this version, rather than at Dayton, they met while both were visiting Virginia Wood at her new home at Melbourne village in 1949. Apparently, Clare and her husband had already purchased land at Melbourne Village, but her husband had died. The story is that Clare enjoyed dinner conversations with Borsodi. She considered herself something of a "heretic" and found Borsodi's ideas fascinating. They took long walks on the beach and over the months the relationship deepened. They were married September 1950. Borsodi designed their house and they settled in.

A New School of Living

In 1948 Melbourne Village formally applied to Borsodi's School of Living (incorporated in the state of New York) and received a charter to establish a School of Living in Melbourne Village. Borsodi offered a series of seminars there on the "Philosophy of Normal Living" in December 1949 and the following January. In 1950 Borsodi sold his home (Dogwoods) in Suffern. He transferred his printing machinery and set up a print shop in a small building in Melbourne Village. The printing shop would serve the School of Living there and at Lane's End and the village at large. Priority was given to republishing his book *Education and Ideology*. In essence, Borsodi had moved the headquarters of his School of Living to Melbourne. In 1952 he incorporated the School of Living of America, Inc. in Florida. There was continued collaboration with Lane's End, but Mildred had dynamic programs of her own and this dynamic would largely define the development of the School of Living to the end of her life.

Melbourne was seemingly an ideal setting for Borsodi. The war was over. Inflation, as Borsodi had predicted, was high. The national debt was staggering. The economy was in deep recession (exceeded only in 2020) and unemployment high. People were drawn to the School of Living model by a sense of need. Borsodi was surrounded by friends – many who had been friends for years – and new supporters at Melbourne.

However, the tide was turning, and it wasn't in Borsodi's favor. To start with, the US economy began to take off to unprecedented levels of growth. The second was that Melbourne Village was turning into an upper middle-class, retirement lifestyle, community. Most people moving there after 1950 considered gardening merely a hobby. Few had the passion and commitment for the new order of things that Borsodi and his friends did. And the size of the village had grown beyond reasonable boundaries for communal management. Conflict, as expected, arose.

Borsodi and the Village founders were committed to the School of Living idea – to creating a homesteader's community and an innovative educational program to support it. It was they, it appears, the School of Living, as the Executive Council, who defined the policies of the community – Elizabeth Nutting in particular – and administered the entire community. Borsodi was teaching out of his *Education and Living*. He was teaching "normal living." The expectations for personal development were high and I believe demanding. That became a minority position.

A split formed in the village. For those interested in the details, there are two publications available: Richard Crepeau's *book Melbourne Village – The First Twenty-five Years* (1946 – 1961), and. Georgiana Greene Kjerulff's *Troubled Paradise*. Both were critics

of Borsodi and friends but they both provided details about the life of the village during Borsodi's stay there that I've employed in this chapter. Kjerulff I think particularly disliked Borsodi. Some of her facts, however, appear questionable.

Nutting, seeking to keep the villagers focused on the original mission, posed three critical questions:

1. What can the individual contribute to the community?
2. What does the individual owe the group?
3. What does the group owe the individual?

The AHF position on these questions had been written into the original bylaws. Membership more than implied support for the mission statement.

In 1951 a panel was formed on "Should the Direction of the Community Be Shifted from the original Idea of Homesteading to a Suburban Community." Most of the newcomers just wanted a nice place to live and the village was a very nice place. It had amenities, social activities, open spaces, close to the beach. Clare Borsodi herself summarized the results of a survey about life in the community: "Melbourne Village represents a way of life that is sane, satisfying , uncomplicated, giving one ample and necessary opportunity for physical, mental and creative self-expression in a community that is healthy, beautiful and extraordinarily friendly." What better advertisement could you have for the life of ease? Florida was becoming the nations' retirement heaven – a place to live the life of ease. But not for starting a revolution.

I think the real question was who was in control of Melbourne Village? And that comes down to the purpose of the Village. For Virginia Wood, Elizabeth Nutting and Borsodi, it was about a dream. Borsodi was brilliant, informed and articulate. He was passionate and had a commanding presence. He was also a man of integrity and principled – he believed in what he offered. In short, he was formidable. No doubt many resented that. And undoubtably he felt frustration, if not betrayal, with another dream being trounced by people who could think only of the next dance or bridge game.

In 1952, the controversy came to a head. Only about a tenth of the community were then Borsodi followers. There was a meeting to "reorganize" the School of Living in February 1952. Relationships between the School of Living and the Board of Trustees continued to deteriorate. When it came down to who controlled what, Borsodi insisted that the School of Living be independent and not under the control of the community. This was, however, only the first round of conflict between the core group and the more recent settlers.

The way out for Borsodi and Clare was a cruise around the world. But he would be back! With a will and a new mission.

India

In May 1952, Clare and Borsodi sailed for Spain to visit one of his sons and then continued on an extensive tour of Asia; a total of eleven countries. They then sailed east, circumnavigating the globe.

Mildred Loomis wrote:

"In many countries Borsodi talked to leaders of thought – in the Philippines, Japan, Nationalist China, Thailand, Cambodia, India, Pakistan, Lebanon, Syria and Palestine. A friend in India, Shyam Chawia of The Ambala Tribune, made contacts for Borsodi in Gandhian schools and universities. In many places the Borsodi's lived with common people."

"He went to discover, if possible, what Asia could contribute to solve the modern crisis. In the great struggle between Liberty and Authority, which would Asia choose – agrarianism or industrialism, decentralization or centralization?

Borsodi begin to compile his notes and write what would become *The Challenge of Asia*, while still on the boat returning home. The book is a major, and powerful, critique of political, and economic centralization and a defense of decentralism. In it Borsodi pulled no punches. It is one of the most vivid representations of the humanistic passion that compelled his life's mission.

I have reported on the contents of Borsodi's reflections from *The Challenge of Asia* in a following chapter on "India." In this chapter I will focus on the conclusion of that book which was a concise statement of Borsodi's educational mission.

Re-education

In the fourth part of *The Challenge of Asia*, published in 1956 by the University of Melbourne Press, Borsodi summarized his educational system. In those three chapters, Borsodi wrote a manifesto for Right Education, for the humanization of mankind, for problem-integrated-education and for a theme he called "University – Not Westernity." In the last chapter he described the University of Melbourne and its curriculum.

Right Education: The Humanization of Man

About mis-education Borsodi wrote:

"If it is education which determines the manner in which human beings live, then any process of education which produces human beings who behave in an abnormal animal-like manner may well be called mis-education."

"Modern man behaves abnormally, and the conditions of life which he has created for himself are abnormal … he has either deliberately chosen or has permitted himself to be persuaded to devote his life to a mistaken life-purpose. … along with them the conviction that he, as a modern man, is properly educated.

Borsodi wrote about, "… the great social, political and economic problems which constitute 'the crisis of our age," and that: "Events in the adult world which are shaking civilization to pieces cannot be disregarded. The social environment, including education, obstruct the development of character and life-conception. You can't change character by reforming institutions (social environment). It has to come from within."

On the other hand, "Right education is that education which results in the acquisition by human beings of characteristics which lead them to act, individually and as members of groups, like normal human beings."

Borsodi wrote:

"… what is the part in life which those whom I have been calling teachers should play? … who must individually bear some share of the responsibility for the state of mankind, and who cannot avoid wielding some of the influence exerted by teaching upon mankind, I address this challenge. …. The time has come when the teacher must cease to be a mere hireling. The

time has come for the teacher to lead. … A new world must be built. … a school and university-centered society."

"… the accumulated knowledge and wisdom of mankind must be made supreme in the hearts and minds and over the behavior of mankind. To us the building of this new world, individual by individual, family by family, and community by community, calls us to a crusade. It calls not only for a moral, intellectual and spiritual revolution in the hearts of those whom I am calling teachers; it calls upon them for triumphant creative action. … It cannot come by compulsion through the use of arms and police forces, nor by playing on man's fear of hell and hope of heaven, and certainly not through material plenty, material security and boundless material progress. It must come only through persuasion and only as a result of influence and leadership."

Borsodi concludes this argument with: "Who shall lead? … teachers who have equipped themselves to lead…"

Problem-Integrated Education: A Syllabus."

In the second chapter of the last part of *The Challenge of Asia*, Borsodi provided a comprehensive outline of his system drawing on his *Education and Living*.

Borsodi made a very clear statement of the aims and purpose of his system:

"Man, in sum, is first and foremost a problem-solving animal. His every action, in so far as it is genuinely human, is always the resolution of a problem."

"The significant difference between man and all other animals is that he alone has the capacity for formulating his problems verbally and symbolically, and for dealing with them, if he will, rationally, reflectively and imaginatively.

"Higher education ceases to justify being called higher unless it equips the individual with an adequate method of determining what to value and what to believe.

"The basic problems of mankind with which every individual everywhere in the world is confronted – the problems which are universal and perpetual and not local or momentary in nature – should be the basis for equipping the individual to meet the challenge of these challenging days.

"The first step is clear and comprehensive formulation of the problems. Until the individual has learned what these basic problems are, he is unequipped for choosing among the many alternative solutions of each one of them.

The most difficult problem is the "integration, in some form, of the enormous bodies of specialized knowledge scattered about in its schools and courses. Integration is essential because without it there is no assurance that the education it furnishes will deserve to be called higher."

"Integration of knowledge from every special field is impossible; but integration based upon the basic problems with some part of which every special field deals, is not.

"Problem-integrated education, then, would be a course of study in which, the basic problems have been formulated, the individual would be equipped adequately to evaluate the knowledge which every art and science; every theology, philosophy and ideology; every theory and doctrine, has to offer mankind

The Seven Basic Problems of Mankind

There were at this point fourteen problems of living which were divided into two groups. The first are: "Problems which call primarily for study and reflection, problems

which can be dealt with while sitting still perhaps surrounded by books in a library or while studying in a classroom – are all problems of thought (or mentation). There are seven of these.

The second set of seven problems are problems of action "which call for motor rather than mental action."

The Three Basic Problems of Belief

Among the first group, problems of thought, are three that deal with what we believe to be true.

I. The Problem of the Nature of Nature (Ontological)

The problem of the nature of the universe as a whole and of everything of which it is composed, to refer literally to anything and everything, material and immaterial, which exists in fact, or in the mind as an alleged fact. That which is, that which exists, that which has being.

There are five ontological problems:

Two of them are problems in definition:

1. The nature of the physical universe.
2. The nature of the metaphysical universe.

Three problems in the complex grow out of the answers to the problems of definition:

3. The problem of essence – is the universe material or spiritual in nature?
4. The problem of destiny – is it a designed cosmos or a meaningless chaos?
5. The problem of origin – was nature created, has it always existed, or is it emergent?

II. The Problem of the Nature of Human Nature (Anthropic)

In this group there are three problems of definition:

1. The nature of man considered from his physical aspect.
2. The nature of man considered from his mental aspect.
3. The nature of man considered from his spiritual aspect.

Five problems are examinations of alternative conceptions of human nature in its customary signification.

4. The problem of equality and inequality.
5. The problem of man's moral nature: innately good, bad or neutral.
6. The problem of man's educable – is man capable of behaving rationally or is he inescapably instinctual, impulsive and irrational?
7. The problem of man's responsibility – is he by hereditary and environment a conditioned biological machine or is he to any extent endowed with free-will and the capacity for free self-direction?
8. The problem of man's psycho-somatic nature – is he, in the final analysis a soul capable of existing apart from his body?

III. The Problem of Events and Their Causation (Etiologic)

Two problems of Definition

1. Objective and subjective experience of events.
2. The nature of causation – natural, human, divine.

And two problems of interpretation.

3. The origin and destiny of the sequence of changes called history.
4. The problem of nature's changes – natural history.

The Four Problems of Evaluation (Values)

The remaining four problems are about the evaluation of the good, the true, and the beautiful.

IV. The Ethical Problem

We live in an age of moral confusion, of moral relativism (amoralism). College-trained leaders often have knowledge without character; little or no concern about moral implication. Material progress is not producing a golden age. The problem is not only of determining moral values but also of imbuing individuals with a passionate determination to act in accordance with them.

There are five preliminary problems:

1. "The need of putting substance into the definition of good and evil, and defining them both in terms which are universal and perpetual and not those merely of the mores and folkways of different cultures.
2. The need of defining conscience; of defining what Kant called the "moral law within." Freud's superego "has robbed the concept of virtually all of its original moral signification."
3. "The need to distinguish between motive and act; between the motives which inspire individual actions and the consequences of the acts performed by human beings.
4. "The need to recognize the quadruplicate nature of the elements involved making adequate ethical judgments." There are always at least two parties involved and "we must formulate the respective rights and obligations of each of them."
5. We need to recognize "that what is learned from the study of ethics must produce a body of universal and perpetual principles – of natural law, of laws which are sanctioned by their morality rather than by the power of the state.

There are four distinct kinds of moral problems.

1. The Problems of Pretersocial Ethics.

Note: The term "preter" means "more than." I believe what Borsodi means by that "more" is the individual. This is at the root of praxiology; as we will see below.

There are at least six Pretersocial problems:

a. The problem of the relationship of the individual to himself – to his own conscience.
b. The relationship of the individual as a human being to the animal kingdom as a whole.
c. The problem of his relationship to the plant kingdom.
d. The problem of his relationship to the soil and to other natural resource of the earth.
e. The problem of his relationship to the greater universe as a whole.
f. The problem of his relationship – assuming that divinity exists – to the divine.

2. The Problem of Correlational Ethics

    a. How should two individuals, in some specific way associating with or related to one another, each act in doing (or failing to do) something with, for or to one another?
    b. And there are two "very important incidental problems:"

        i. The problem of equality and inequality.
        ii. The problem of defining and distinguishing between interactions and relationships,

3. The Problem of Associational Ethics.

    a. What rights and obligations has an individual member relative to a group to which he belongs, and what rights and obligations has the group as a whole relative to its individual members?
    b. The relationship of an individual who belongs to one group, with another group.

4. The Problem of Gregational Ethics.

This group deals with "the interactions and relationships of groups rather than the interactions and relationships of individuals." How should groups of various kinds treat one another? We need to clearly formulate the nature of the basic gregational problem.

a. How should individuals, acting as members, leaders, or representatives of a group, when engaged in doing – or refusing to do – anything for, to or with another group and the individuals who belong to it:
    i. Strive to have their own group and members treat other groups and their members;
    ii. actually treat other groups and those who belong to them;
    iii. how should the other group be involved and its members reciprocally strive to have their own group and its members act;
    iv. and actually treat the other group and its members?
b. Organized gregations – empires, nations, counties, municipalities; churches, schools, colleges, universities, business corporations, labor unions, etc., including of course, families, perhaps the most neglected of all organized groups by modern thought.

c. Unorganized gregations – castes and classes; audience, crowds and mobs; social, religious, political and other "movements."
d. Pseudo – gregations – races and nationalities; occupational, income and wealth classes, sexual, marital and age groups, etc.

V. The Problem of Beauty versus Ugliness (Esthetics)

1. The problem of the validation of esthetic values, of making esthetic judgments, of formulating esthetic standards.

Six Problems of definition:

2. The nature of beauty and ugliness.
3. The nature of human sensibility.
4. The nature of, and the distinction between, taste and skill.
5. The nature of nature as object-of-art and artistic performer.
6. The nature of man-made objects-of-art – paintings, statuary, buildings, clothing, furniture, pottery, textiles, etc.
7. The nature of man's artistic performances – singing, dancing, acting, oratory, conversation, manners, etc.
8. The nature of science – the possible essential identity of science and arts.

Two problems of classification and definition

9. The nature, and the classification, of various arts as wholes.
10. The nature and classification, of artistic qualities.

Two problems in esthetic education

11. The problem of creative artistic production versus that of art appreciation.
12. The problem of the creation and cultivation of an esthetic conscience.

Beauty is important. The esthetic problem is not resolved by mere philosophic consideration. The individual sensitivity must be cultivated.

VI. The Problem of Truth versus Error (Epistemological)

This is a threefold problem: of method, of motivation, of cultivation:

1. The problem of method is that of distinguishing between truth and error.
2. The problem of motivation is that of developing convictions strong enough so that the individual feels that what seems to him true can be, and should be, implemented in the manner in which he lives.
3. The problem of cultivation is that of developing his epistemological conscience.

Its solution calls for nothing less than an emotional conversion – a passionate conviction that truth is important. "'A still, small voice' within imbues the individual with a feeling of obligation (conscience) to seek the truth and to live the truth; and a feeling of deep unease and even remorse for any failure to live up to the truth and act the truth in every area of living."

The problem has a uniquely important relationship to all the other basic problems here outlined, since none of them becomes genuinely meaningful unless it is possible to distinguish and to develop conviction…

4. The problem of the nature of revelation.
5. The problem of the nature of sensation.
6. The problem of the nature of reason.

VII. The Problem of Purpose and Motivation (Epistemological).

1. The problem of purpose generally.
2. The problem of ultimate or transcendental goals – of ends in life in contrast to means.
3. The problem of immediate and intermediate goals – of purposes which logically and consistently should be means toward the realization of the individual's ultimate objectives in life.
4. The problem of dynamization – of the dynamic which moves the individual to actually exert himself, and perhaps even to sacrifice himself, in order to achieve his chosen goal.
5. The problem of motivation – of inner, internal and personal dynamization.
6. The problem of stimulation – of the dynamization of others in order to persuade them to realize the goal which that individual considers they should adopt.

What is really involved in the development of telic conscience?

The Seven Basic Problems of Implementation

These are the problem which cannot be resolved by thought alone. "Problems which call for motor rather than mental action, as in dealing with the problem of occupations – the use of time in working, playing and resting – are essential problems of action.

VIII. The Problem of Mental and Physical Health (Psycho-physiological)

The maintenance of physical and mental health, and, if either has been impaired, the problem of the restoration of either or both.

Five are problems in definition:

1. The nature of mental health.
2. The nature of physical health.
3. The nature of hereditary endowment.
4. The nature of the environmental and education factors.
5. The nature of the health regimen; Two have to do with the maintenance of health itself:

    a. The problem of regimen for the male life-cycle.
    b. The problem of regimen for the female life-cycle.

Three problems having to do with disease or the restoration of health, one a problem of definition and two are what are ordinarily thought of as medical problems:

6. The nature of therapies.
7. The problem of restoration of mental health.
8. The problem of the restoration of physical health.

IX. The Occupational Problem

The use of time.

1. How should he organize his life so far as the use of his time is concerned?
2. The planning of our time must and should be different for men and women.
3. The planning of our time must be different for both men and women for each age period.
4. Production and creation.
5. Recreation.
6. Recuperation – work, play, and rest.

X. The Problem of Possessions

1. The problem of the distinction between property and trusterty.

Seven problems of definition:

2. The nature of human beings as possessions.
3. The nature of the natural resources of the earth.
4. The nature of consumption goods.
5. The nature of capital goods.
6. The nature of relational assets.
7. The nature of claims or token assets.
8. The nature of inherences or inheriting assets.

Two problems of implementation:

9. The problem of title – who may or may not own what?
10. The problem of tenure – how should property and trusterty be held and by whom?

XI. The Organizational Problem: Enterprise and Efficiency

Two problems of definition:

1. The nature of enterprise.
2. The nature of efficiency.

Six are formulations of operational problems:

3. The problem of stimulation.
4. The problem of decision.
5. The problem of transaction.
6. The problem of mensuration – of cost, price, utility and value.
7. The problem of public relations.
8. The problem of management.

One crucial problem:

9. The problem of control.

XII. The Civic Problem: Harmony versus Violence

The crisis of our time is not economic; it is civic and political. It has to be approached in terms of principles, not expedients.

Five problems of definition:

1. The problem of the nature of government.
2. The problem of the nature of harmony.
3. The problem of the nature of violence.
4. The problem of the nature of coercion.
5. The problem of the nature of crime, both individual and gregational; of the nature, therefor, of both personal and national aggression.

Five problems to deal with the control of government:

6. The problem of control by functional jurisdiction.
7. The problem of control by electoral jurisdiction.
8. The problem of control by territorial jurisdiction.
9. The problem of control by gregational jurisdiction.
10. The problem of control by structural jurisdiction.

XIII. The Institutional Problem: Social Conservation versus Social Reform

"There are at least sixty clearly identifiable institutions [listed elsewhere], … and these fall into at least three main categories: a. psycho-physiological institutions, b. vocational institutions, and c. intellectual and spiritual institutions.

Four problems of definition:

1. The nature of social systems.
2. The nature of psycho-physiological institutions.
3. The nature of vocational intuitions.
4. The nature of intellectual and spiritual institutions.

Two all-important final problems:

5. The problem of evaluating existing institutions.
6. The problem of developing methods of maintaining existing institutions (if they are valid), and of devising methods of changing them, (if they are invalid).

XIV. The Educational Problem: Humanization versus Provincialization

"Man is a human being by virtue of his existence as a member of the human race. It's not nation but global in scope. No man's education is complete until he has been humanized – until he has been de-provincialized and de-parochialized and equipped intellectually and emotional for membership in the whole human race.

Eight problems of definition:

1. The nature of enculturation and juvenile education.
2. The nature of humanization and adult education.
3. The nature of mis-education.
4. The nature of centralization and decentralization.
5. The nature of right-education.
6. The nature of progress.
7. The nature of normal living and the concept of the normal.
8. The nature of re-education.

Three distinct problems related to a praxiological solution:

9. The problem of individual versus group action.
10. The problem of the basic problems of which individual action is always a resolution.
11. The problem of choosing among alternative ideas, ideas and ideologies about the process of humanization.

On Method

Seminar presentation are to be made to small and not to large groups of students. There should be two or three seminar leaders to add diversity of viewpoint and process. The topics of the seminars are the universal problems. They should be at least five or six sessions.

Problem-integrative education has four noteworthy virtues:

1. It is integrative. Its about how to produce whole men instead of mere specialists. It is about overcoming intellectualizing and accumulation of factual and technical knowledge.
2. Equips the student with a tool with which to evaluate not only special fields of knowledge but the experiences of life itself: A clear definition of the problem at hand.
3. It forces those who take part in it to examine their basic beliefs, basic values, and basic notions about living, and to consider whether those which they had unconsciously accepted might not be false to the realities and eternal verities of life. It inspires us to apply ourselves.
4. It is directed towards individuals, not groups or masses. It is about the problems each of us deals with.

Borsodi wrote: "What we need to do is to equip the individual with the means for basing his thinking and his action upon valid postulates, human values, and effective means and measures." When we can deal with our personal problems, we can solve social and political problems. He added: "In the absence at least of a determining minority of such individuals, civilization begins to disintegrate, and barbarism begins to replace it."

The method is praxiological: "Problem-integrated education is praxiological in nature. It equips the individual for rational, humane, and effective personal conduct and individual behavior. It makes ethical and esthetic consideration a part of all individual action. It replaces modern man's preoccupation with his predominately economic philosophy by a philosophy in which the good, the true, and the beautiful are considered at least of equal importance to wealth and power."

I think it is extremely important to understand that Borsodi's approach is about individuals. Each of us must accept the responsibility for solving problems be they personal, community, at work, etc. Each of us must be prepared to define and solve problems. Each of us must be equipped with the necessary tool to solve these problems and that means doing the work to get them fixed. Doing that collectively, social issues will resolve themselves.

Chapter III: University – Not "Westernity"

There is, of course, a stage setting for the problems we face. In a word, the world seems to be falling apart. Instead of a wonderful scientific progress we have "instead world-wide disillusionment, world-wide bewilderment, world-wide revolution. There were two terrible world wars and the Great Depression."

In response:

> *"The University of Melbourne has been organized by a group who recognize that, in dealing with the problem of creating a sane and peaceful society, neither religion, nor science, nor patriotism, nor revolution has saved us. They believe that the time has come to consider whether the failure of the institutions upon which mankind has pinned its hopes may be due not so much to the political, economic and social errors of its organization, but fundamentally to the mis-education of the leaders and the rank and file of mankind. They believe that the time has come to consider whether the challenge of our times does not call for a crusade aimed at re-education and right-education.*

The crisis in education was highlighted by Robert Maynard Hutchins who was also a pioneer in educational reform (see below). He was quoted as saying:

> *"The crusade to which we are called is noting less than to procure a moral, intellectual, and spiritual revolution throughout the world. The whole scale of values by which our society lives must be reverse."*

The conviction which led to the establishment of the University of Melbourne is fivefold:

1. That there is a serious – almost fatal – defect in modern education;
2. That this defect evidences itself in a lack of faith in liberty, an unwillingness to trust in the implementation of truth, a desperate reliance upon power and might, and sometimes a cynical preoccupation with material wealth;
3. 'That this defect in education of the leadership of the West explains the confused manner in which the free world is dealing with its critics and trying to defend itself from its attackers;
4. That this defect is philosophic in nature and no amount of specialized vocational education, no matter how efficiently it is provided, will correct it;
5. That there is a chance that this defect might be remedied, and, by a kind of intellectual catalysis, a new idea introduced not only into American higher education but into higher education in the rest of the world as well, through a course of study such as that planned for the University of Melbourne.

Borsodi added:

> *"What the University of Melbourne is doing is to concentrate on the study of the missing factors in education. It furnishes its students with a means for forming a philosophy by which they can live genuinely serviceable and satisfying lives; a method of choosing among the conflicting philosophies of life from which modern man must make a choice. It initiates them into a method of education which can be introduced in some form into any school, and which may become the basis of a curricular revolution which will build a real sense of moral responsibility and inspire students with ethical and esthetic values which are genuinely civilized; which are both cosmopolitan and indigenous; which are, in the final analysis, the values of normal human beings.*

In the "Objectives of the University," Borsodi wrote:

"The University of Melbourne is a university – not a "westernity" or "nationality." Its concept of culture is neither American nor Western; its orientation is deliberately cosmopolitan. The real aim of higher education should be Man – not Western Man, not National Man but Civilized, Humane, Universal Man.

"It is not an intellectual department store. It is universal because its one objective, the study of Praxiology, is universal in nature; its approach to study (surveying and integrating the knowledge and wisdom in all the arts, all the science, and all the philosophies and religions of mankind), is universal in scope; its course of training in how to write and speak is of universal utility. It believes not only that knowledge can be integrated, but that it must be, and that such integration is an essential prerequisite to graduate study – that without such integration, the graduate runs the danger of becoming a highly trained and specialized barbarian instead of a genuinely civilized human being.

"Its curriculum is organized not in terms of subjects but … in terms of problems – of the basic problems of living – [which] leads to integration: to the examination of all the arts, all the science, all the religions and philosophy of mankind for the purpose of evaluating what each has to offer, in the way of answers to the basic problems with which living like a civilized human being confronts every man and woman, everywhere.

"It considers that learning how to earn a living without consideration of how to live is not higher – but the lowest kind of – education.

"It carefully restricts its student body to a small number of men and women who are representatives of different cultures, different nationalities, different religions; who are sufficiently mature, intellectually and emotionally, to seek the root-cause of everything; with whom sheer association will itself constitute a liberal education. Since intimate fellowship in such a small group is unavoidable, right selection of membership is itself a contribution to the education of the entire student body.

It is not about the accumulation of facts. It does not rely exclusively upon professional pedagogy, no matter how skillful. It relies mainly upon the inspiration of intimate sharing in the search for truth with leaders of all fields of thought and action. What is presented to the student body is therefore examined and subjected to challenge in every seminar by a visiting faculty of great distinction, representative of important, and particularly, of opposing schools of thought.

University of Melbourne

I think we are only beginning to understand Borsodi's motivation for a chartered institute of higher education. Hopefully more documentation will be recovered. He brought a very different perspective to education. He apparently never attended a day of college. Other than his few years at Gerlach Academy he appears to have been self-taught. He was a voracious reader and had a mind retentive.

Borsodi's early audience was popular, not academic. He did have extensive academic connections, however. He sought out people he wanted to know and there are a large number of distinguished professors on that list. We know he placed adult education at the highest priority. We know that he considered the School of Living as a Community University in *Education and Living* (1948).

There is one association between Borsodi and higher education that I think is highly instructive and that was with St. John's College. We know that Stringfellow Barr, President and a founder of St. John's College, was engaged with Borsodi from at least 1940. We know that Robert Maynard Hutchins, who had much to do with the formation of the curriculum

that St. John's adopted, admire Borsodi and I think the admiration was mutual. And of great importance, Borsodi earned St. John's master's degree for a thesis, actually a plan, to make it an economically independent institution. Borsodi retained an affection for Barr and St. Johns to the end of his life.

I've made a personal study of that college and its program over the years and I think it of value to know more about it and how it may have shaped the development of Borsodi's work.

St. John's

St. John's College, at Annapolis, Maryland, is one of the oldest in the US, founded in 1696. A new curriculum was established at St. Johns in 1937; three years after the founding of the School of Living and the year after its headquarters opened at Bayard Lane. Stringfellow Barr, as President, and Scott Buchanan, took over the college and set up a new curriculum based on the Great Books of the Western World. This curriculum was derived from the Great Books project at the University of Chicago under Robert Maynard Hutchins and Mortimer Adler. It was modeled after John Erskine's two-year liberal arts, or Honors, program at Columbia, which Adler had attended[46]. Encyclopedia Britannica mass marketed tens of thousands of 54 volume sets of the Great Books to homeowners. Most libraries had a complete set. There were discussion groups organized across the country.

The St. John's curriculum consists solely of the study of the great books. There are no lectures, only seminars. The program introduces students to the entire scope of western culture. The approach is Socratic: Questions are asked, answers probed. It teaches critical thinking. It nurtures quality mindedness. It includes arts, music and lab work, often repeating landmark original experiments in science. I believe Borsodi envisioned the University of Melbourne modeled on St. Johns only with a focus on the problems rather than literature.

As far as I know, St John's is currently the only "liberal arts" college in the country. That is, seminars on the great books are its full program. It does not have majors. Other schools do have great book programs as part of their program, but I don't know of any that do not have majors and degrees in this or that subject. There is a second campus at Santa Fe, New Mexico.

I became interested in St. John's in the mid-1970s as a young college professor and program administrator. Metropolitan State College (now University), Denver, Colorado, was working to developing human resources. It was also a program to develop community. Advisors to my program, which was professionally oriented, strongly encouraged a more liberal curriculum. I read Mark Van Doren's *Liberal Education* and Jacques Barzun's *The House of Intellect* and scheduled a visit to the St. John's campus in Santa Fe. I came away deeply impressed with its unique program. That experience gives me a better understanding of Borsodi's vision. Latter I visited the main campus in Maryland.

Liberal arts had been the foundation for learning for centuries in the West (and comparable programs in the East). It is general, wholistic and comprehensive. It is intended to uplift the mind and spirit, develop critical thinking, form character and hone

[46] The program ended three years before Mildred Loomis attended Columbia.

leadership qualities. Until relatively recently, professional education came after a solid course in liberal studies.

Borsodi's St. John's Thesis

In 1942, Borsodi submitted an 80-page thesis to St. John's for which he was awarded a master's degree, the highest degree it confers. It carried the title of "A Study of the Potentialities of the Intermural Economic Activities of Colleges and College Communities."

At the time, during World War II, students were few. The young men had gone off to war and women had not yet been admitted to St. John's. The college was suffering financially.

While the war was a factor, Borsodi criticized the boom and bust nature of capitalistic economy as an ongoing threat to institutional stability. Colleges and universities were (and are) dependent on economic conditions. Borsodi was an economist by profession. He gave his alternative economic theory full scope in his *Prosperity and Security* (1938). His approach was not classical capitalism but definitely not of the centralist communist or socialist style. It was more of a localized free market. The thesis solution was for the college, any college for that matter, to become economically self-sufficient; no longer dependent on the government, markets or massive cash contributions. This is, of course, the model Borsodi had developed for the School of Living.

Borsodi began the plan with an argument for "community," rather than "institution" – an association of people with a common purpose. He was focusing on the dynamics of community in general and recommended reorganization along community lines. He proposed a Charter Community.

Borsodi made a table of members of the St. John's community at the time which included faculty and their families, employees and their families, students and their families. There was a total of 430 people of which less than half were students.

Borsodi also compiled a list of projects and enterprises associated with the college. Some were social and cultural, some primarily economic and several administrative and fiscal projects. And, of course, there was the educational program.

A community shares a high degree of common economic life. Hi plan included a bank and script of its own, and other financial functions. He addressed housing, power plant and farms. He constructed a detailed budget which ended, and I think this proves the focus, with a detailed assessment of the food requirements of the community – loaves of bread, dozens of eggs, quarts of milk – the entire food needs for each person and the entire community (with the dollar value of each item).

In short, he completely reorganized the economic and social structure of the college and the people associated with it. However, the war came to an end and St. John's returned to prosperity. The plan was forgotten.

Borsodi's University

As noted, the story about the new university at Melbourne began when Borsodi started evening seminars at Melbourne Village in 1949. Friends gathered there every evening to "define and ponder major problems of living."

There was a fair-sized audience for Borsodi's work but only a fraction of what he and close friends thought it could be. The School of Living at Lane's End in Ohio, under the capable direction of Mildred Loomis, was doing well. A headquarters building had recently been completed there with a meeting room and library. Mildred conducted workshops there. She organized conferences there and elsewhere. There were nearly 20 study groups across the country. Borsodi also traveled to lecture and conduct seminars. Mildred published the School journal, *The Interpreter*. Of the roughly 700 subscribers, about half were homesteaders scattered from New England to California. But that was still considered a far smaller audience for the School of Living than it could be.

The Melbourne community, it seems, attracted people who were rather affluent and well educated. The prestige of a local university, one dealing with the innovative Universal Problems of Living was apparently appealing, at least to the early members. Borsodi and friends decided to create a new, problem-centered, university curriculum to develop community leaders – leaders of decentralism; men and women with a new and compelling vision and the ability to realize it.

In 1952, after Borsodi and Clare returned from their cruise around the world, it appears that serious work got underway. An organization was formed, and a board assembled. Those were challenging and tumultuous years for all involved. We pick the story up in 1954.

Troubled Paradise

In 1954, Melbourne village had about 100 homes, a village hall, a credit union, a small store, swimming pool and other amenities. But it wasn't a happy place. With Borsodi back, conflicting interest about the future of University of Melbourne again erupted. The community split into two blocks with Wood, Nutting and Borsodi on one side; called the Wood bloc; and the village board represented the other bloc. Margaret Hutchinson, one of the Village founders and early supporter of Borsodi, joined the board bloc. Clare Borsodi tried to bring the two blocs back together but without success.

The Wood bloc, founders of the Village and other staunch supporters of Borsodi and his School of Living, were in fact still more or less an executive committee. The board bloc responded that they wanted to put an end to the impractical and visionary activities of the Wood bloc.

At the annual meeting that year, Borsodi reminded them that the founding ideal for Melbourne Village was for a small community that would be more self-determining and freer of the influences and effects of the greater world with all of its problems. It was intended to provide greater security for families. It was an intentional community founded on rather traditional ideals. In short, these were the ideals he had advocated at Dayton, Bayard Lane and West Nyack. Borsodi asserted that if they abandoned those ideals, they would become just another suburb. He also reminded them of their original agreement for "building a more wholesome, neighborly, cooperative, democratic, education-centered community than the average community in America today." But there was more.

Georgiana Greene Kjerulff, in her *Troubled Paradise*, published the full text of Borsodi's comments at the annual meeting. She reported that it was in fact Borsodi who

identified the two blocs. He pointed out the pressure being but on Nutting and Wood. He made a detailed statement of what one could call persecution of them by some community members. His indictment was, indeed, detailed, explicit, and documented. Kjerulff reported that the effect on the board and community was stunning. Some of them wept.

Nonetheless, the board bloc prevailed and Wood, Nutting and Borsodi were relegated to a committee with no policy authority. The village would no longer be organized as an educational community as had been originally planned and agreed upon by the founding members. Melbourne Village and the University of Melbourne had a parting of ways. The Village did in fact become a trendy retirement suburb.

Creating the University

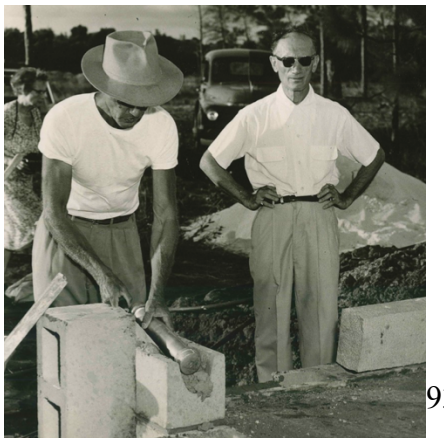
At that 1954 annual meeting, Borsodi announced that he would establish a graduate school and stated his case. Following the meeting he and friends set out to do just that. Nine people were named regents including himself, Clare, Virginia Wood, Elizabeth Nutting, Margaret Hutchison, Jane Button, Shirley O'Donnell, Tom Sweeting and T. J. Wood. Nutting was Dean and Borsodi Chancellor. (One version had Mildred's close associate in Ohio, Rose Smart, as a regent.)

It appears that Borsodi amended the 1952 charter for the Melbourne School of Living (School of Living of America, Inc.) and changed the name to the University of Melbourne in 1954. He proposed three resident faculty and some 50 visiting faculty representing North America, Europe and the Orient. The project gained considerable support from leading educators and writers across the country including Robert Hutchins, Lewis Mumford and Louis Bromfield

The university committee proposed buying a 20 acres lot on the edge of the village. In part due to the tension, the Melbourne Village board balked at having the university on its property. They also objected to having a racially mixed faculty and students.

The regents begin to look elsewhere. There was some negotiated with the City of Melbourne. A new board of regents was formed with eight of the city's residents invited to join. V.C. Brownlie, a Melbourne resident, leased 40 acres of land to the university located just outside Melbourne's city limits in April 1955. The condition was that University of Melbourne would be established and courses taught. His contract was amended by the regents to allow students of color. The Friends of the University was established, and fundraising started. Clare and Virginia Wood each donated $25,000.

It should be noted that it was at this time that Borsodi choose to define his practical, problem-integrated, approach to education was "praxiology." He defined it, citing an impressive list of scholars who had worked on the subject, as a "General Theory of Action." To distinguish it from mere "theory," Borsodi clarified that it was about behavior, about human action in response to the problems of living. One pundit defined it as "coming to grips with reality."



On October 6, 1955, the cornerstone of the of University of Melbourne building was laid.

Dedication

A dedication seminar for the university was planned for December 27, 1955 just prior to the university's (postponed) formal opening. The topic was "Man is the Problem?" It was a full week event to "probe the significant issue, what is the nature of man?" There were four panelist, Joseph Wood Krutch, Willis D. Nutting, Paul J. Tillich and Philip G. Wylie. Ralph Borsodi was listed as Lector.

Borsodi and Professor Willis Nutting chaired the panel. Twenty-five seminarians attended. Attendees noted that this conference was unusually intense and productive. The panel of the seminar was considered outstanding. While it was judged a success by many, some considered it too long and too intense; complaining that it was grueling and exhausting. Borsodi was exhausted by the end of it.

Mildred Loomis was there. She noted in an article some years later (April 1978 *Green Revolution*, p 7 plus) that the four panelists explored "The Nature of Man." Of the panelist she wrote that Krutch upheld the naturalist position, Tillich the theological, Dr. Philip Wylie the humanistic and Nutting the Catholic. She wrote that Borsodi asked the questions. More on this below.

The official opening of the first year of the University of Melbourne took place on September 23, 1956. Dr Willis Nutting presided as acting chancellor. He emphasized the minority nature of University of Melbourne with its focus on "a time of stress and change." Two more seminars were held in September with the formal opening.

Prof. Willis D. Nutting of Notre Dame took a sabbatical to work with Borsodi on the university project. Dr. Nutting, Elizabeth's brother, was a dynamic character. He became an Anglican priest but in 1930 converted to Roman Catholicism. He was a Rhodes scholar at Oxford, after which he completed his Ph.D. in philosophy at the University of Iowa in 1931 where his father had been a professor. He accepted a position at the University of Notre Dame in 1936. He and his wife bought two acres and made it a homestead. Faith, family, agriculture and education were his primary interest. He had a deep concern about the increasing institutionalization of education and particularly the separation of education from family and community and secularization. He taught a great books program modeled after St. John's. He is professional credited with have developed a successful adult

education program at University of Melbourne. Returning to Notre Dame he began a program of adult education called "Seminar on the Great Human Problems." At the time of his retirement, Notre Dame set up the Willis D. Nutting Award for contributions in education. He appears to have been a leader for Catholic agrarianism. A chapter by Nutting was included in *The Rural Solution: Modern Catholic Voices on Going Back to the Land* (Published in 2004).

The university opened with one full-time (Don Gospil) and 30 to 40 part-time students. The program of study was a formal seminar format devoted to the major problems of living. Nutting gave a morning seminar during the weekdays. He and Borsodi conducted workshops for study groups of up to a dozen people on the major universal problems.

According to a brochure, the University of Melbourne was a graduate school. The program was opened to a maximum of thirty [full time] students per term[47]. Tuition was $500 (equivalent to about $4,400 today) for one mandatory semester in residence. Students would work through the then 14 (briefly 15 and then 16 before settling again on 14) problems in twelve weeks and then spend three weeks writing and developing their own unique personal expression of the program. For a Masters' degree students were required to perform research in their field and write a thesis. For the Ph.D. they would do more extensive work and write a book. These works were intended to be published by the University of Melbourne press (students paying the cost of printing but would receive a royalty). They would be used to develop the library.

The term "university," rather than "westernity" was about two points. First, the curriculum was based on eastern as well as western works (St. John's was only western). Second the program was universal rather than specialized. Students were expected to become familiar with the whole scope of human knowledge – a point Borsodi had emphasized from the beginning, at Suffern, starting with homeschool his own children and more fully outlined in *This Ugly Civilization*.

The program, as noted, was based on "a praxiological philosophy" – the study of individual action. Rather than produce innumerable specialists, it represented a problem integrated educational approach that contrasts strongly with what higher education had to offer. It was at this time that the spoked wheel model of the major problems was produced (apparently by Mildred) to show the integration[48] of the problems radiating from a common hub.

Mildred gave but a brief outline of the University of Melbourne experiments in *Reshaping Modern Culture*. She had more to say in a published article, "The New University," in the *Journal of Higher Education*, December 1956. In this article, Mildred made a point of contrasting the program of study at the University of Melbourne compared to other colleges and university, such as Columbia, where she had obtained her master's degree. She used a term Borsodi possibly originated: "intellectual department stores." She said that she, as did most other students, came away with a sense that they would take their place at the peak of civilization, only to find "world-wide disillusionment and world-wide

[47] It was intended that at least half the students would be from the non-western world.
[48] This approach was employed by leading writer Ken Wilber nearly half a century later with the creation of the Integral Institute.

revolution." She had much more to say in critique of higher education such as: It suffer from superficiality, specialization, is unrepresentative of the world at large; it "fails to touch the emotions, to fire and inspire with purpose, and to quicken the consciences of students."

The University of Melbourne, she wrote, represented a very different approach: What we know is aligned to how we live, the problems cover all of living, the program is based on a modern and scientific understanding of reality and each problem is related integrally with all the others. Finally, "it is directed toward individuals and not toward groups or masses. It recognizes that ultimately all problems – even those which call for some collective action – are dealt with individual by individual." Praxiological education "equips individuals for rational, humane, and effective personal conduct and individual behavior. It makes ethical and aesthetic considerations a part of all individual action. It replaces modern man's preoccupation with wealth and power; it assists each person to form his philosophy of the Good Life based on the good, the true, and the beautiful."

The stated challenges the University of Melbourne addressed, were both the assault on liberty of recent history and the inability of "free" institutions to secure, let alone advance, the cause of freedom. The response:

> *"The University of Melbourne has been organized to furnish mature and qualified persons, who show promise of being able to teach others, an opportunity to frame for themselves a philosophy within which human liberty stands as rationally justified and to be desired."*

The focus is on the effectuality of individual human actions. The program addresses the "Unexamined, mistaken or irrational answers to the universal problems of living," which, once accomplished, allows the discovery of solutions. To do this requires the "whole of human knowledge." The outcome is a science of human action.

Mildred noted that a library had been collected at Melbourne classified under the universal problem topics. It held some 4,500 carefully selected volumes.

Journal of Praxiology

Borsodi launched and edited the *Journal of Praxiology* (from the Greek word praxis which means practice; or the study of purposeful human behavior) in March 1955. The *Journal of Praxiology* was a professionally printed magazine format, printed by the University of Melbourne Press, meaning by Borsodi, 6 x 9 inches with light green covers. The *Journal of Praxiology* was billed as "A Quarterly Journal Devoted to the Integration of Knowledge on the Basis of the Major Problems Involved in the Humanization of Human Action." Subscription was $3.00 per year. It ran quarterly for ten issues with the last dated March 1957. The Journal was discontinued when Borsodi resigned as Chancellor July 1957.

That first issue introduced the University of Melbourne. The back of the front cover states that the University of Melbourne is:

> "A Self-Governing Association for Study
> An Institution for the Guidance of People
> An Agency for Resolving the Problems of Civilization

There were six officers and Borsodi was listed as Chancellor. It listed 18 board members and 64 faculty members (all but six were visiting faculty) and briefly described

the program. The board of editors include Ralph Borsodi, Mildred Loomis, Willis Nutting, Lillian McDonald, Peston Henry Miles and Peter Van Dresser.

That first issue consisted of a symposium of 21 distinguished persons responding to Borsodi's idea of praxiology. Each contributor made a statement about the topic and to each Borsodi responded. This dialogue is outlined below.

There was an announcement that following the dedication scheduled for October 30th was a five-day seminar on "The Role of the Military, Naval and Air Forces of the Nations of the World During the Next Hundred Years." The seminar was open to the public and the fee was $35.00

The second issue, June 1955, was the catalogue. The catalogue also appeared as the fourth issue, December 1955. With these two issues we get Borsodi's vision of the university. The basic content for the two catalogues is essentially same except for the list of problem topics and faculty. The Summer issue was for the 1955 – 56 university term. The curriculum for the Spring 1956 semester, starting in February was to begin with a week-long "Seminar on the Major Problems of Living, each morning at 9 a. m., Monday through Saturday. Following that were 13 seminar topics, one for each of the then 13 universal problems (from *Education and Living)*. This opening was, however, postponed.

The Winter Issue, December 1955 was for the 1956 – 7 school year. I should note that between the two issues, the list of problem topics increased from 13 to 16. The number of universal problems settled to 14 problems in *The Challenge of Asia* and this list was much used by Mildred during Borsodi's India years. There would be 17 in 1957 and this would be the final list. I gave the list of problem topics and subtopics in *The Challenge of Asia* at the beginning of this chapter and will leave their description to that[49].

In the second catalog, the Fall Semester starts with an "Orientation in the Praxiological approach to Philosophy." The semester continues, with breaks for Thanksgiving and a Winter Recess, until February 1957 with the granting of degrees. The week before the end of the semester was a "Writer Period." The Spring Semester, from February to July 8th, followed the same program.

I want to start with the catalogue content first. In it I think we find Borsodi's vision for the University of Melbourne.

The catalogues start with an inside cover "Challenge and Response." I think this might be considered a mission statement and is worth considering in full:

I. Challenge: The University of Melbourne believes that the crisis of our times constitutes a challenge to which the world of education must make an adequate response. It believes that no response will be adequate which is not universal – which does not include the contributions and contributors of both East and West.
II. Response: The University has been organized to furnish to graduate students who plan to devote themselves to careers in education, in the humanities, or in the social sciences, an opportunity to frame a philosophy by which to organize their work and plan their lives.

[49] In my update of the list in 2018 there are nine universal problems. More on this in the last chapter.

III. Plan: The plan through which it proposes to provide such an opportunity is a problem-integrated survey of the bodies of knowledge in various cultures of the world which comprise man's accumulation of answers to the problems with which living has confronted him.
IV. Faculty: The faculty will consist of distinguished exponents, from many countries and cultures, of alternative answers to the major problems of living.
V. Method: The method upon which it proposes to rely is the seminar, led by panels of resource-leaders.
VI. Hope: The University believes that any institution of higher learning anywhere may use this plan. It hopes that its own experience will lead many schools to adopt it. Above all, it hopes that its students will find in it the basis for a response adequate to the challenge with which the times confront them.

The university is a "university" in that it addresses universal issues. It is also not an intellectual department store but embraces all departments of knowledge. It is not about the accumulation of facts but in their application. It is universal because of its praxiological objective – solving our problems is a practical concern for all people in all times. It believes that knowledge can be integrated and must be. The problem-centered, rather than subject-centered, approach gives it this universality. All fields must be included.

"It carefully restricts its student body to a small number of men and women who are representatives of different cultures, different nationalities, different religions; who are sufficiently mature, intellectually and emotionally, to see the root-causes of everything; with whom sheer association will itself constitute a liberal education. Since intimacy and fellowship in such a small group is unavoidable, right selection of the membership is itself a contribution of the education of the entire student body."

The next topic is about "The Crisis in Education." It opens with a quote by Robert Maynard Hutchins, another lamentably forgotten figure. He once wrote that the lack of support for Borsodi was regrettable.

Hutchins was a Yale law school graduate and then professor. He was made President of the University of Chicago in 1929, at age 30 and the youngest university president in the country, where he radically transformed its curriculum. He introduced the Great Books program there during the 1930s. He then went on to head the Ford Foundation and then the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions in Santa Barbara, California, which he started, where he served for 1959 until his death in 1977. Hutchins inspired the Encyclopedia Britannica Great Books program and St. John's College. His book, *The Higher Learning in America* (1936) is a classic. It was the first of a long list of seminal books he wrote. I had the good fortune to briefly correspond with him.

Borsodi wrote that the "main defect" of education "seems to lie in the failure to develop a sense of personal moral responsibility." To that, regarding institutions of higher education in particular, he added, that they "are manifestly failing to inspire their graduates with a philosophy of living – with goals to which to devote themselves – remotely comparable in ethical and esthetic values with the quantities of technical knowledge with which they are now equipping them."

The "almost fatal defect," is "in a lack of faith in liberty, and unwillingness to trust in the implementation of truth, a desperate reliance upon power and might and sometimes a cynical preoccupation with material wealth." The University of Melbourne seeks to remedy these defects.

For all of our material progress, there is a widespread sense of crisis, "world-wide disillusionment, world-wide bewilderment, world-wide revolution. It has been a violent and troubling century." To correct these trends requires leadership in right education. Right education is a study of praxiological philosophy, the study of human action, "the study of how to act wisely and how to live like a normal, civilized human being." It is about effectively overcoming the problems of living. It is a matter of learning to rigorously define the problem, then bringing the accumulated knowledge of humankind to bear on its solution and then to apply what has been learned to achieve the good life. There is no single solution to the world's problems.

The University of Melbourne was chartered as "an institution for higher learning devoted to the Arts and Science of Living." Its roots were stated as going back to the founding of the School of Living in 1934 which was created as an experimental program in the practices and the principles of living in the machine age. That experiment was brought to a close with World War II. Following the war Borsodi produced *Education and Living* as a text for right-education and normal living.

Borsodi conducted a number of seminars beginning at Oberlin College June- July 1944. There were eight of these. The final seminar was held over two weeks at Melbourne in February 1954. He called these "anti-lectures" (a term borrowed from Henry James) whose task is to challenge but not to demand acceptance of what he or she says. The logical next step was a program to continue this series with "a framework for searching inquiry and study." That being the University of Melbourne curriculum.

All formal instruction at the University of Melbourne was to be held by the seminar method lead by a lector and a panel of resource leaders. The sessions would begin at 9 am daily for an indefinite period followed by individual "reading, research writing, discussion, consultation and recreation." Only attendance at the first seminar was obligatory.

Each seminar was devoted to one of the (then 16) problems. The seminar allowed probing of student's assumptions and "the illumination of the problem being considered." The program starts with the nine problems concerned with the "formulation of basic postulates of action – of conduct and behavior." Three of these problems are about outlook:

I. Ontologic – problems about the nature of nature;
II. Antrhopic – problems about the nature of human nature;
III. Etiologic – problems, both physical and human, about the nature and causes of events.

These are followed by six problems of evaluation.

IV. Teleological – problems of purpose and motivation;
V. Epistemological – problems of truth;
VI. Esthetic – problems of sensitivity and good taste, and of technique and skill;

VII. Gregational ethics – problems in the relationship of the individual to groups, and of groups to groups;
VIII. Ethics of association – problems in relationship of individual to individual; and
IX. Preter-social ethics – problems of the relationship of the individual to himself, to nature and natural forces, and (if he accepts its existence) to the divine.

This leaves seven problem "primarily concerned with the translation of basic postulates into philosophies of living – in the concrete programs by which individuals live:

X. Educational – problems of cultural adjustment and humanization;
XI. Psycho-Physiological – problems of mental and physical health, and problems of therapy;
XII. Occupational – problems not merely of vocation, but of productive work, of recreation and of recuperation;
XIII. Possessional – problems of access to, and of acquisition of "things" of all kinds;
XIV. Organizational – problems of efficiency in the formation and conduct of enterprises of all kinds;
XV. Civic or political – problems having to do with the role of coercion in the control of human action; and
XVI. Institutional – problems having to do with the organization of social systems.

These problems, it was noted, are not to be treated in isolation but as they relate to each other.

Borsodi quoted Confucius: "Men of superior minds busy themselves first in getting at the root of things, and when they have succeeded in this, the right course of action opens to them."

Each week, on Sunday afternoon, was a Convocation of the entire student body and open to the public; "occasions upon which they give formal and symbolic expression to their common ties, beliefs and aspirations." The program was non-sectarian. It consisted of music and an inspirational, rather than informative, lecture, followed by discussion.

As noted, each semester ended with a writing period in which students chose a topic of interest. For the master's degree, a student could work independently and produce a paper or, and this was encouraged, a group exercise of three to six students could work together and produce a book to be published by the University Press. For the doctorate, each student would produce a book.

The student's thesis was intended to demonstrate their ability to work systematically. The doctoral dissertation was to be an original contribution. There was also a comprehensive oral examination. The examination board sought to evaluative how each student expressed themselves in writing and speaking. The emphasis was on character and capability. Emerson was quoted in this regarded: "The force of character is cumulative … Character teaches above our wills. Men image that they communicate their virtue or vice only by overt action, and do not see that virtue and vice emit a breath every moment."

Know thyself. Each student was required to submit a personal life-history and life-plan. They would consult with faculty about this work and continually revised it during their program of study. And then continue to develop it throughout their lives.

Conversation and group discussion were a regular part of the program. This was intended to help students make the issued studied their own. These conversations would include faculty and particularly visiting faculty.

A lot of emphasis was put on both speaking and writing and illustration to help the students clarify and express their understanding. They were being trained as teachers and leaders.

The catalog made a point that the climate at Melbourne was one of the best in the world – comparable to the French Riviera. Students were encouraged to enjoy the out of doors; including golf, yachting, hunting, tennis, riding and swimming.

While there was no formal language requirement, students were encouraged to master at least one language other than their own. The university was an international and intercultural enterprise.

The University of Melbourne had both a library and a press. The library consisted of 4,500 books classified not by subject but rather by the problems they addressed. The press was Borsodi's and he was a trained and experience printer. *The Challenge of Asia* and the *Journal of Praxiology* were printed by the University press. So too was a new edition of *Education and Living*; a boxed set of two paper-bound volumes. The press was also printing School of Living publications edited at Lane's End.

Admission was limited to 50 "carefully selected mature men and women. …. Only those who are committed to teaching as a serious life vocation, whether they intend to teach in formal intuitions of learning or through writing, the arts, the ministry, civic leadership or other professions which influence a substantial number of people." And, "It is, therefore, very important to avoid admitting students who are not seriously committed to a vocation of leadership, or who are not properly equipped for the contribution which they themselves must make to the University program." Priority was given to having as many students from the Orient as from the Americas and Europe. A formal academic education was a preferable prerequisite.

"Each candidate for admission must submit, as the major document in his [her] application, his [her] personal life-history and life-plan. This should state his [her] religious, philosophic, economic, and political beliefs; should list some of the books which inspired and instructed him [her] most; and name the relations, friends, mentors and teachers who, in his [her] opinion, exerted the greatest influence upon him [her]. This document will indicate the level of self-understanding and the degree of maturity and seriousness of his [her] vocational and life objectives. It should also be prepared so as to show his [her] command of the English language, the quality of his [her] writing style, his [her] work experience, avocational and recreational interests, and any other ability and interest." This plan was to be supported by three personal reference letters. And each applicant must have a physical checkup.

The fee was $250 per semester for the first two semesters only. A $400 -600 publication fee for each student, submitted at time of publication, was also required for group publications and $1,200 for sole publishers (doctorate level). There was a $10 application fee. Scholarships and loans were available. Estimates of living cost were given. There was also a placement service for graduates with world-wide contacts.

Organizationally, it was noted in the catalogue that the University was incorporated under the laws of the State of Florida as a private institution for higher learning. It was supported by four organization: The Board of Regents of the University, the Senate of the University, the Fellows of the University and the Friends of the University. The Fellowship was composed of all students and they participated in the self-governance of the University. The Fellows would also provide peer review of each other.

The University was planned to be self-financing and accept no funds from either state or federal sources. The Friends of the University were those who donated privately to its operation. It had subscription rates running from $10 per year, supporters with donations of $50 per year and benefactors who donated $100 or more per year.

The faculty consisted of residential and visiting faculty. There were six resident faculty members: Bart Berrie, Ralph Borsodi, Jane Button, Lillian McDonald, Elizabeth Nutting and John Turner.

To the extent possible, half of the Visiting Faculty were to be leaders of though from Asia and the middle East. Two list were provided of Visiting Faculty, first those from abroad which contained eighteen names. The second from the US, which contained 53 names. All but two of these faculty listings had biographical data. This was a distinguished listing and indicated the range of support for the University of Melbourne.

What is Praxiology?

There were ten issues of the *Journal of Praxiology*. Two, as reported above, were University of Melbourne Catalogs. The remaining eight can be divided into two categories.

The first issue was a symposium on Praxiology. The remaining seven issues were standard professional journals with collections of articles. Each of the issues was dedicated to one of the universal problems. Those seven issues carried 83 articles and there were distinguished names on the list of authors. However, very few were original contributions; mostly Borsodi, Nutting and other University faculty (see below). The bulk of the articles were reprints. While these issues are informative reading, they generally do not speak directly to the University of Melbourne program. Because of the rarity of issues of the *Journal of Praxiology*, I have made a summary report on the contents of those seven issues published as an appendix. In time, we hope to have the complete series availably digitally.

The first issue does speak directly to the University of Melbourne program. It is entitled "The Concept of Praxiology." There were 21 contributors. Overall, the respondents supported Borsodi's basic thesis but there was also some criticism of the concept. Each made a statement and Borsodi responded to each in turn. I will summarize his comments.

Borsodi opened with a definition of praxiology: Actions; practices; conduct; behavior. He noted that the dictionary called it a "proposed science." He intended to have "proposed" dropped from the definition: "For if anything deserves to be made into a science," he wrote, "it is the study of individual behavior, both as it appears in the personal activities and in the social relations of individuals." He proposed that "the study of human action is the study of studies." He added: "For one reason, because in the study of human action all the accumulated knowledge and wisdom of mankind can be focused and integrated; for another because just as nothing is more important than human behavior, so

no science can be more important that the science which deals with it." It's not that we lack the information needed to define this science of praxiology but rather that it is scattered around among various disciplines.

In a letter that was sent to each symposium participant, Borsodi cited a number of recent books about human action. He noted that his interest in this idea dated to the formation of the School of Living in 1934. And then he wrote that the approach of praxiology is "from the behavioral in contrast to the societal standpoint; from the standpoint of human relations in contrast to that social and group relations; and from the individual and familial standpoint in contrast to that of the social. As we see it, it calls for a re-appraisal of present methods of education in philosophy, in the humanities, and in the social science."

Borsodi started with those who were most skeptical. He started with Harvard professor Pitirim Sorokin. Sorokin, as noted elsewhere, was influential in the Country Life movement. His 1941 book *The Crisis of Our Age*, also supported Borsodi's statement above about the mission of the University of Melbourne. Borsodi cited that book often. I've studied Sorokin closely. He did a formidable analysis of human behavior over the course of history. He is in the top three on my list for understanding the dynamics of human society over time. The other two are Spengler and Toynbee. He also lived a fascinating and adventurous life which I have reported elsewhere.

Sorokin responded, in brief, that "At the present time it is a fairly well-established fact that the social, the cultural and the personal aspects of any sociocultural phenomenon are inseparable, and that you cannot study human behavior isolated from the total personality of a respective individual and from the social and cultural conditions in which the individual lives, thinks and acts." But little progress had been made in this regard, he added. He was overall skeptical of Borsodi's thesis.

Borsodi took a firm hand in responding. To start with, he acknowledged Sorokin for "forthrightly and eloquently call[ing] attention to the failure of the social sciences." Borsodi, and this is a core theme for his work, said that failure was due to treating issues as "societal" in the first place. It is due in large part for the social sciences restricting themselves to description. This is an abstraction of individual behavior. Of course, individual and group behavior are interrelated; everything is interrelated. "Distinguishing between related things does not assume that they are separate and isolate; merely makes it possible to understand them and to deal with the more intelligently." What we need is not more and more descriptions but prescriptions – individual action or behavior. It is what the individual understands and does that determines the course of events.

One contributor was a noted behavioral psychologist who discounted the individual entirely. There is a lot of contrary opinion about the nature of the individual in the social sciences.

There was also some resistance to the use of an unfamiliar word such as praxiology. It's ambiguous, strange. Maybe "men in action" would be better. Again, abstract description vs. individual behavior to which Borsodi responded that such "objectivity" can be a fetish. If "praxiology" sounds strange, what about one suggestion to translate it into "Humanization of Human Action."

Homesteading icon Scott Nearing wrote:

> *I welcome any comprehensive study of human behavior. It lays the foundation for the arts of good living. As the field of action or praxis is developed, it will necessarily include:*
>
> 1. *The relation of the individual to the personality*
> 2. *The relation of the person to the community, and*
> 3. *The relation of the individual to nature, to the cosmos or natural environment.*
>
> *The field is wide and opportunities for important contributions beyond number.*

Nearing, it should be noted, was another outstanding homesteader. He was inspired to homestead by Borsodi. They appear to have known each other. Nearing was also a published author. He was an activist socialist and pacifist. He and his wife Helen left a noteworthy legacy.

Praxiology is less concerned with the study of human behavior than how one should act. Does that mean it is confined to purposive action? Is it based on moral principles? Or does it apply to action not determined by conscious decisions? Or is there some invisible hand? Borsodi responded that it is not limited to purposeful action. We need a science that allows us to better understand all forms of behavior. Or, as one responded put it, "praxiology is the generalization, inclusive discipline of all the concrete practical sciences." As such it would have a different structure than the pure sciences.

In response to the question of how to make men better, Borsodi wrote: "Individuals are the source and the dynamic of social forces," and cited a long list from "Jesus and Buddha, Mohammed and Gandhi, Rousseau and Marx, Adam Smith and Jefferson, Napoleon and Hitler, Lenin and Mussolini … such as these have over and over again altered [the course of history] for the better or for the worse."

Borsodi added: "Education is a means and living an end. Education must then be tested by its effect on the quality of living."

One contributor wrote that "if we teach people to think without acting, we must not be surprised if later they act without thinking."

Others noted the term "Knowledge is power." They affirmed the problem that knowledge could be used for good or evil. Borsodi's response suggest that we need right education to know the difference.

Willis D. Nutting had something to say along this line. As noted above, he was a devout Catholic and a man of high moral principle. He also became the head of the University of Melbourne following Borsodi. He addressed "the fetish miscalled 'objectivity.'" It is more an equation of "how to act" than descriptions of "how human beings act." We need to understand the difference between, in Borsodi's terms, normal and abnormal actions. The choice between the normal and abnormal is a question of virtue vs. vice, Nutting wrote. This is what Aristotelians, both ancient and Medieval, he added, "were concerned with when they talked about the virtue of prudence which they defined as the habit of mind by which we, in our practical life, make decisions which are wise in the light of the goal that we have set for ourselves." He affirmed that the individual and the family "are prior to the larger society in importance," and that "strong persons are more important

than a strong society, that they can exist without such a society, and in fact may be weakened by such a society." If this is what praxiology is about, he said he was for it.

Another contributor, speaking of the emerging field of ecology, and about man's role in the order of things, said "We welcome the arrival of a university magazine dedicated to developing these facts into a workable whole."

Another echoed Borsodi's reflection on being puzzled about theoretician's insistence on "the mutual exclusiveness of disciplines like anthropology, sociology and psychology." There is too much abstract speculation. To Borsodi he wrote: "… it is an extremely promising sign therefore that … you are attempting to synthesize these various approaches and so contribute towards a science of social men. This, I believe is the most promising approach to the study of human action in all its manifestations and the true understanding of human society."

I might add that the last statement is good description of general systems theory; and should note that the Society for the Advancement of General Systems Theory, a subject then known only to a handful of enthusiasts, was founded in 1954. This is an approach that Borsodi had advocated for many years.

A successful businessman wrote that "Modern specialization has tended to reduce life to small and superficial fragments that do not fit into any complete, wholesome pattern." He added: "The human community has been disintegrating as the centralizing process continues." This results in "spiritual impoverishment." Something in us dies.

Borsodi concluded this issue with an article "On the Education of Educators." He opened it with the idea that it's not the knowledge the teacher has but rather the character of the teacher which really educates. The character of a person is not the philosophy he or she professes but the philosophy they practice. It is, and he again quoted Emerson, "that virtue or vice emit a breath every moment."

Borsodi cited Henry Adams' *The Education of Henry Adams*, as perhaps the "most important critique of modern education written during the past half century." Borsodi described the book as:

> *"A comparison of modern man with thirteenth-century man; of machine-age man with medieval man; of the philosophy of the twentieth-century man with that of pre-renaissance man; of the education of the man whose preoccupation, in the language of Adams, is the dynamo and not the Virgin – of the man, to bring the symbol up-to-date, who has produced the atom bomb and developed nuclear power with the man who created and built Mont-San Michel and Chartres."*

Borsodi quoted Adams about modern education on several topics:

On the purpose of education: "From cradle to the grave, this problem of running order through chaos, direction through space, discipline through freedom, unity through multiplicity, has always been and must always be, the task of education, as it is the moral of religion, philosophy, science, art, politics and economy."

On elementary and secondary schooling, Adams wrote that: "The education he had received bore little relation to the education he needed."

On college, mostly that few were really interested in it to start with. "The chief wonder of (college) education is that it does not ruin everybody concerned in it, teachers and taught." And that "The entire work of four years could have been easily put into the work of any four months in after life."

Education had been largely based on Thomas Aquinas and Adams wrote that Aquinas was "rather more scientific than Haeckel or Ernest Mach." These were two founders of modern science. "Modern science offered not a vestige of proof, or a theory of connection between forces, or any scheme of reconciliation between thought and mechanics; while St. Thomas at least linked together the joints of his machine."

This is what we have lost, said Borsodi and continued:

> *"What modern man desperately needs, and what above all those who presume to educate him need, is an adequate philosophy of life. In its absence modern man will either be satisfied with what is – automobiles, television, atomic bombs and all the other gadgets of the times; or he will look back longingly and try to recapture the faith of former times; or in desperation embrace, not the utopian socialism of Robert Owens and William Morris, not the utopian decentralism and agrarianism of Mahatma Gandhi, not the gradualism of Roosevelt and Nehru, but the ruthless philosophy of Marx and Engels, or Lenin and Mao."*

> *"For the teacher this is nothing to be lightly dismissed. As Henry Adams eloquently put it: 'A parent gives life, but as a parent gives no more. A murderer takes life, but his deed stops there. A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops."*

Borsodi then described the University of Melbourne and described its program of study as the seminar on the major problems of living and basically tutorial. In summary:

> *"It will involve rigorous concentration upon certain techniques, certain bodies of thought and knowledge and certain ideals. It will aim to equip the student to marshal his thoughts, to speak effectively in public, and to write clearly; these are the techniques; they are educational in nature. It will also aim to furnish the student with insight into the major problems all men confront and knowledge of the most important prescriptions of different arts, sciences, philosophies and religions with regard to them. These are the bodies of thought and knowledge, they are praxiological in nature. Finally, the course will seek to imbue each student with the ideals appropriate to free and responsible men."*

The Journal Conversation

While, as I said, the articles in the seven issues are more or less relevant, some bear comment. That includes the first of them, by Albert Schweitzer (Vol 1, No. 3). It was an excerpt from his *The Decay and Restoration of Civilization*, published in 1923. Borsodi must have closely read it. Schweitzer too saw the pursuit of civil order as an individual endeavor; men and women with a mind trained for the task. The collective, he wrote, is a "fettering sprite." Schweitzer added that the economy as robbing individuals of their freedom, their independence, without which they cannot be fully human. Like Toynbee, like Borsodi, Schweitzer believed that the course of civilization could be guided by a creative minority. Or not.

As noted, an important axiom of Borsodi's systems is that only individuals have the capacity to act. Borsodi emphasized that it takes an effective education to form such individuals. Our educational system no longer even tries to produce a well-rounded human being. Nutting supported this thesis. He cited specialization as a major barrier. He

affirmed that before you can solve a problem you have to clearly define it. And that cannot be achieved in a subject-centered system. It takes an integrated approach.

Vol. 1, No 4, was devoted to "Education and Ideology." Borsodi provided the lead article. He began on a theme of revolution; if not defiance of things as they are. He opened with this line: "The sickness from which modern man is suffering, is neither economic nor political; it is philosophical." We are what our education has made us. In short, we suffer from the ideas we adopt; the doctrines, the ideologies. They induce neurosis. But we have an option; we can learn to live like a genuine human being. That, of course, is the University of Melbourne program.

This issue listed the topics of the "Man is the Problem" conference held December 27, 1955 to January 1, 1956 at Melbourne; and an impressive reading list. Mildred contributed an article that described her experience of the conference. She also offered a statement on consensus about the conference; in short: They agreed that if a better society results, it will be because men create it; they are not satisfied that we must wait for better institutions to create a better world. Borsodi made it clear that the future depends upon education focused on transformational change.

Vol II., No. 1 was devoted to the concept of human action. It asked if this is an age of reason or rationality [rationalization] and by the latter "the human tendency to falsify motives and explain what we do or want to do in terms that will win social approval as well as personal self-esteem." Modern society has become a battleground between reason and unreason. Many have submitted to experts to run our lives.

University of Melbourne faculty member Lillian McDonald framed the context of this issue. Actions, she wrote, can be voluntary or involuntary. A real question is can we really choose our behavior or is it defined by nature or by social pressure? What we need is a deeper understanding of what it means to be a human being. We need to understand how our choices, our actions, are shaped by the social and natural world of which we are a part. We need to know what is "normal," as defined by Borsodi. We achieve this through the study of the universal problems of living.

Oliver Reiser, a University of Pittsburgh professor, further addresses the issues of the chaos of specialization. Reiser was a close student of Korzybski's general semantics. He published a seminal book entitled *The Integration of Human Knowledge* in 1958. The movement to developed integral knowledge, of which Reiser was a leader, is a topic in the last chapters in my *Alfred Korzybski: Time Binder*[50].

That issue also notes a project of the University of Melbourne to develop a "standard vocabulary of basic ideas, ideals, and ideologies with which philosophy, the humanities, and the social sciences deal." Borsodi would complete this project with his small book, *The Definition of Definition: A New Linguistic Approach to the Integration of Knowledge*, in 1967.

Borsodi offered a reflection on Lao Tzu, an ancient Chinese philosopher credited with the idea of the Tao: "Nature never makes any ado, and yet Nature does everything."

[50] "The Integration of Human Knowledge" can be found starting on page 203 at this link: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1WJe2g-05327ho3EhbDTZ2hN58zN-fwM9vAD-LYIqMOo/edit

Taoism, he wrote, expressed "Familial and villagistic, agrarian and handicraft" culture; that is, the independent life of the School of Living homesteader.

There is an excerpt from Lewis Mumford's *The Conduct of Life* in which Borsodi noted points of dramatic social change that are typically associated with names like "Confucian, Buddhist, Christian, Mohammedian, Marxian," etc. They come out of moments of crisis and disintegration. They are often associated with "a single decisive personality, or a small group of informed and purposeful men."

Vol. II, No. 2 focused on the issue of Implementation. It is about "action, rather than the mere thinking out of an idea." Borsodi opened this issue with an article on "Implementing a New Education." He wrote that he considered all life is education, every person is an educator and every relationship and event in life educational. Right education is organized. It is life-long. It starts in the home. The teacher is the steward of trusts. About these stewards, Borsodi added the requirement: "the education of adults by the wisest and most disinterested individuals society can produce." He wrote that every generation stands midway between the past and the future. From the past we received the accumulated knowledge and wisdom and to the future we transmit it. In the present we apply it to our needs; and perhaps add to it. It is a question of how we apply this knowledge.

Borsodi stated the University of Melbourne program as being to:

> *"Furnish people in every community with a new kind of leadership through the agency of a new kind of educational institution. Establish schools of living or community universities, and through them provide such leadership in every community that every individual and group therein will think it natural to turn to the accumulated knowledge and wisdom of mankind for light upon the problems which they have failed to solve or which they have not been able to solve properly."*

And he had more to say on the topic. That included a list of six criteria for transforming existing universities into effective learning institutions. In short, he wrote: "Right education is fundamental to the inculcation of the knowledge which will develop this ability to reason and decide on behalf of one's own liberty and wellbeing, as well as that of others."

University of Melbourne faculty member Lillian McDonald submitted an article with plans for the development of the university campus. It included a photo of the existing administrative and library building (pictured above) and renderings for proposed structures included a combined auditorium and cafeteria, a new press building, four dormitories and an open-air chapel.

The eight additional articles in this issue can be considered literary contributions but in general supported Borsodi's thesis.

Vol. II, No. 3 was about "Functional Organization." It is again a "literary" work with all but two articles reprints. The exceptions being by Willis Nutting and Ralph Borsodi. Nutting wrote of his long-standing criticism of modern education. He proposed:

> *"The best site for education is a community of learning, where several teachers and students together, encouraging, criticizing each other, strike sparks off each other, leading a common life of dealing with their problems. Here there can be an atmosphere of challenge that*

leads everyone to do his best and keeps everyone on his toes. In this atmosphere everyone is a teacher and everyone a learner. This is what every school, and especially a college, ought to be."

Borsodi contributed "Wanted: A New Economics Text." He made no mention of his own economics text, *Prosperity and Security*, published in 1938.

Vol. II, No. 4. Did not state a theme. In the editors' comment, however, we read:

"This issue of the Journal of Praxiology begins a series of contributions on the implications of the praxiological method for various academic disciplines. Dr. Nutting begins the series with a study of the implications for history, and Miss McDonald follows with its implications for philosophy. Others are in preparation by various friends of the university. We believe we are initiating a series which will provide major contributions both to the illumination and the justification of the concept.

They also note the publication of the Melbourne University Press first book, Borsodi's *The Challenge of Asia*. As noted, the more or less final description and outline of the curriculum of the University of Melbourne was carried in that book and has been summarized above.

Nutting wrote: History falls short as a science for lack of method. It has little if any power to predict the future. He added:

"The history we want to read must tell a story. That requires interpretation, searching for cause and effect and perhaps a presumption of moral judgement. Like Marx, Gibbon, Spengler, Toynbee and Sorokin had a story to tell. Winston Churchill, a British stateman, wrote his definitive History of the English-Speaking Peoples. Churchill wrote his six volume The Second World War from fact and from personal experiencing as a commanding figure. For these writers there is a point to history. There is a story to be told and there is something to be learned about human destiny.

"From a praxiological perspective, it is not as much a matter of predicting the future from past events as it is shaping an alternative future. It is about a Green Revolution. It is about learning about human nature. Above all, it is about learning from those who shaped society – not the great names but the men and women who built communities.

McDonald added that the problems of living are about the brute facts of existence; not some ideal or ideology. Each must work through the realities of his or her life. We must make choices about the options available to us. We need to make clear and accurate observations about what is actually going on around us. Much of Borsodi's work was in fact to make exhaustive lists of those options – a compilation intended to address the questions: What is the problem we wish to solve? And what do we need to solve it?[51]

Mildred shared her thoughts about her own education, particularly at Colombia, and the curriculum of the University of Melbourne. I've covered some of this above, but she provided more context in this article. I think she said it best in these terms:

The … University of Melbourne … offers courses that "go to the root of everything." Students do not study subjects. They study sixteen universal and perpetual problems of living. "The real problems of man," she wrote, "never change – from place to place, or time to time. Their forms change, but their essences do not." From this study, she wrote, she was able to personally "substitute much clarity for confusion, integration for fragmentation, satisfaction for frustration."

[51] That objective was achieved in Borsodi's *Seventeen Problems of Man and Society*, 1968.

Mildred raised the question: "How to produce whole men instead of mere specialists? The University of Melbourne method is integrative. It is organic. It embraces the emotional as well as intellectual. It is practical – it is about solving the problems of life. It is praxiological, "directed toward individuals and not towards groups or masses. It recognizes that ultimately all problems – even those which call for some collective action – are dealt with individual by individual." What society needs is not corporations and governments and institutions but rather a determining majority educated and equipped with "effective means and measures" without whom civilizations disintegrate into barbarism.

Vol. III, No. 1 focused on the gregational problem.

The timing of this issue was important. In January of 1957 Martin Luther King, Jr. and other black pastors met in Georgia to coordinate civil rights protest. This issue particularly addressed education in Asia and particularly India. A conference was proposed on that topic.

Borsodi's contribution was "The Problem of Gregational Ethics." The gregational problem is how groups treat each other. He provided a chart that listed gregational forms.

Borsodi opened by noting that the problem was one of parochial values. As a result, we are in a period of ideological conflict that "makes this an age of moral confusion," or perhaps worse, "Moral Relativism." This persistent situation suggests something absent. We need not only moral values but "individuals with a passionate determination to act in accordance with them". We devote vast sums to science and technology but not to the solution of ethical problems.

Borsodi listed five distinctive kinds of ethical problems (which are discussed in *The Challenge of Asia*). He continued with four "crucial" problems of how groups should treat each other and offered four approaches (listed in the "Appendix: Praxiology Notes.").

Borsodi proposed that the achievement of a more adequate understanding of moral laws comes out of a study of the gregational problem.

This issue was the last of the *Journal of Praxiology*. Of what happened at this point we have little documentation, but it is clear that racial issues were always an undercurrent since at least Dayton some twenty years earlier. The University of Melbourne was dedicated, as noted above, to education and diversity. Borsodi wanted it to be a place open to all people; people of all colors, traditions and beliefs. I can't help but feel that his upcoming flight to India was perhaps an expatriate's quest. There, with friends of Gandhi's, he found a far more inclusive environment.

In this image we see a representation of human diversity, the bird of peace, a book, a scroll and the scales of justice.

I would highly recommend you read the synopsis in the "Appendix: Praxiology Notes."

Closing of the University of Melbourne

Borsodi submitted his resignation as Chancellor of the University of Melbourne on July 19, 1957. It appears that the stress of developing and administrating the university were telling on him and others, including his friend Virginia Wood. Apparently, Clare Borsodi was also feeling stressed. Allegations about mismanagement were made but not substantiate. Clare refuted that claim. It is clear that there was a lot of tension in those last days. We have no such reported instance, but it is clear that when backed to the wall, Borsodi could be intimidating. He was highly principled. There were things about which he was morally unwilling to compromise.

After the last issue of the *Journal of Praxiology* came out in March 1957, it is reported that Borsodi shut down the press and put the equipment up for sale. He was moving on.

Dr. Nutting carried on through 1957 and 1958 with seminars, lectures and study groups. In 1958, Brevard Engineering College approached the MU regents about acquiring the facilities. The regents decided to continue the lease through the 1959-1960 school year. It was then turned over to Brevard and subsequently became the Florida Institute of Technology (FIT). The University of Melbourne building is still on the FIT campus. The University of Melbourne corporate charter was not formally dissolved until 1969.

Thus ended the University of Melbourne and Ralph Borsodi's connections with Melbourne Village. Regardless of the outcome, Borsodi had been a driving force in the founding and early history of Melbourne Village. The University of Melbourne was a manifestation of Borsodi's ideas and methods. The university brought new people and new ideas into the community through its seminars, and it transported ideas as far afield through the *Journal of Praxiology.* It offered something new and unique to American higher education.

The University of Melbourne experiment was short-lived, but it gave Borsodi and friends, including Mildred, an opportunity to bring the School of Living program to a high degree of organization. And there was more to come. In 1958 Borsodi and his wife Clare returned to India. Borsodi had become strongly engaged with Gandhian educators in India prior to Melbourne and they invited his back. He was treated with distinction and his Indian friends helped him produce some of his most important works and continued to support him to the end of his life.

In 1960 Borsodi sent a letter to the AHF trustees resigning his membership. He was still in India. Clare had a found a new home for them in Exeter and he joined her there after leaving India in 1961.

Chapter 9

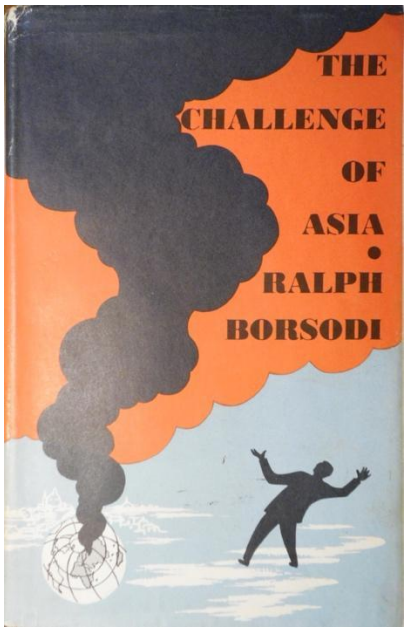
India

It is unclear when Borsodi first became interested in India. Given his interest in eastern thought, he probably had a good knowledge of Indian history, culture and particularly knew about Gandhi. The Keene's and Templin's, who worked with him at Suffern in the 1940s, had been Christian missionaries in India and followers of Gandhi. Paul Keene, at least, knew Gandhi. Both Borsodi and Gandhi had a common understanding of the need for a non-industrial society. If Borsodi was the "Decentralist Supreme," so was Gandhi. Borsodi was also a man of peace[52].

Following World War II came a wave of decolonization. The Soviets and the capitalistic West were competing to shape the future of these countries according to their respective ideologies. China became a communist state in 1949 and launched a massive program for social transformation. And then came the war in Korea in June 1950. It was clear that the East would be a battle ground not only militarily but also socially and economically.

In May 1952, Borsodi and his wife Clare started a cruise that took them around the world. They stopped in Spain to visit one of his sons and then continued on an extensive tour of Asia; a total of eleven countries. These included Lebanon, Syria and Palestine, India, Pakistan, the Philippines, Japan, Nationalist China, Thailand and Cambodia. Borsodi met with leaders in education and culture. "He went," wrote Mildred Loomis, "to discover, if possible, what Asia could contribute to solve the modern crisis. In the great struggle between Liberty and Authority, which would Asia choose – agrarianism or industrialism, decentralization or centralization?"

Borsodi begin to compile his notes and write what would become *The Challenge of Asia*, while still on the boat returning home. The book is a major, and powerful, critique of political and economic centralization and a defense of decentralism. In it Borsodi pulled no punches. It is one of the most vivid representations of the humanistic passion that compelled his life's mission.



The Challenge of Asia: A Study of Conflicting Ideas and Ideals was published in 1956 by the University of Melbourne press. To that volume Borsodi appended several chapters about the program being established at the University of Melbourne. A review of that section can be found in the "Melbourne" chapter.

At base, *The Challenge of Asia* is about economics. But economics is a part of society. The principles of a society define the nature of its economy. Borsodi devoted a

[52] Borsodi did believe in the defense of person, family and community.

good part of the book to these fundamental principles and made clear his choice of liberty over authority.

I think there is another lesson to be learned from this book. Given the state of the world during (and for several more decades) the Cold War. There were two mutually exclusive ideologies battling for dominance. Is that not so in the US today? Borsodi proposed an alternative; a middle way, so to speak. That was an agrarian culture of homestrading families living in small collaborative communities that took care of their own needs.

Borsodi returned to India in 1958 for a lecture tour. It turned into an extended stay. The first part of that story is in this chapter because I believe it helps set the context. The full story about his extended stay is covered in "The Education of the Whole Man" chapter. From that point to the end of his life, Borsodi continued a close association with India. He would visit India three more times. *The Education of the Whole Man* and *Seventeen Problems of Man and Society* were both published in India.

The Challenge of Asia

Borsodi opened *The Challenge of Asia* with a comment that during the 1950s, Asia was shaking off the imperialistic yoke. Asia was then part of the "third world," the battleground between western capitalism and Soviet (and by then Chinese) communism. Either option was about massive modern industrial development. Borsodi shared Gandhi's vision; his own vision. He wrote: "Old Asia was personalistic; Old Asia was familistic; Old Asia was villagistic." He saw in Asia the last best hope of preserving these values.

The choice between tradition and westernization lay with the leaders of Asia. Borsodi didn't think much of them. They were sometimes bad leaders and sometimes perhaps good leaders with bad ideas. They were "not really interested in the family, in the village, in religion and philosophy, in the arts and crafts which made old Asia the cradle of man's culture." They were interested in Progress and Technology. "They have accepted the West's over-individualization and over-centralization 'lock, stock and barrel.'" They have embraced our cherished delusions of Nationalism, Industrialism and Urbanism. In that respect it didn't make much difference is they choose Capitalism or Communism.

Is the future to be found in science, technology, industry, revolution or religious salvation? The modern age came with promises but those promises, of liberty, peace and abundance, have not been fully realized through industrial progress.

What we need, said Borsodi, is a philosophy that allows us to determine how to organizes our lives around the right principles. There are four universal social principles: the individual, the family, the community and the world. For America, priority is on the individual. In Russia, on society. Locke gave us the philosophy of atomistic society. Hegel one leading to totalitarianism. Both are wrong.

There is still hope in Asia, but it is not the hope of its leaders. Despite Gandhi's warnings to the contrary, Nehru was determined to make India a modern industrial nation. The challenge of Asia, Borsodi believed, was the same that the US had experienced: to retain its traditional values and an agrarian, human-scaled life, or to take the path of the ugly civilization.

Prime Minister Nehru, arguably an apostate disciple of Gandhi's with political ambitions, lead the country from 1952 to 1964. While Congress did pass laws to establish more equitable rights for minorities (untouchables) and women and to promote education, Nehru's government advocated industry and technology. As a prelude to the industrial agriculture "green revolution[53]," the government seized village common lands and instituted public works to install electricity, roads, promote mining and manufacturing, created the MIT level Indian Institutes of Technology and otherwise modernized the economy[54].

The mistake of Asia leaders was their pursuit of Western standards. Nationalism, for example. Borsodi asked if nationalism was an improvement over colonialism, or just a substitute. Leaders might speak of prosperity, an end of hunger and disease, of liberty and democracy, but they create national states. Nationalism, Borsodi concluded, was absurd. There are no such things as nations. India, for example, is a kaleidoscope of people and races, not a nation.

Industry is another error. Borsodi had made that point with his 1929 *This Ugly Civilization*. We pay a very high cost for centralized industry. It not only consumes irreplaceable resources, it discards folkways, arts and crafts. It creates cities. The city, the office and the factory are psychologically debilitating. Gandhi called rather for a rural and village revival.

What about democracy? If government is a necessary evil, then is democracy the lesser evil as some pundits have claimed? If democracy is not the right answer, then what is? Borsodi's answer: None of them. The answer is not the vote, he wrote, but rather in knowing <u>how to live</u>. You cannot make a democracy out of a unit of government larger than a local community. It is about right-education. Right education is not about literacy; not about ideology. It is learning how to live the life of a normal human being. It's about learning to live in harmony with other people. It's about learning to provide for the security of your own family. Borsodi wrote:

> *What the crisis in the world calls for is not revolt but learning.*
>
> *We must learn, learn, learn – old, simple, elemental, platitudinous truths about how human beings should live, how they should treat one another, how they should organize the relations between the enterprises they establish and conduct. Then each year there would be less and less need of government, and government – both democratic and non-democratic – would shrink and shrink until not we but our "children's children's children" finally reach that far away Golden Day when mankind can be fully trusted, when liberty will be enough, and government will have entirely 'withered away."*

How more ironic, added Borsodi "than the completeness of its rejection of the greatest personality it has contributed to our times," Gandhi. While acknowledging their debt to him to free India, "the leaders of India are subconsciously engaged in repudiating the kind of India to the realization of which he gave his life." Borsodi added:

> *"The India which Gandhi envision, the India of the village and the country-side; the India of the spinning-wheel and cottage industry; the India of satyagraha and ahimsa. This is the soul of existent … India, as Liberty is the soul of free America."*

[53] So named by industrial agricultural interests who mechanized and commercialized agriculture following World War II, but anathema to the School of Living where the idea of the Green Revolution originated with the founding of the School in 1934.
[54] Today, 70% of India's population is rural and the poverty rate (under $1.25 per day) is close to a quarter of the population.

We have a similar condition in America he wrote: "the America of Thomas Jefferson – the America of the Declaration of Independence; of national rights, state rights, local rights; of homesteads of farms, of shops and independent business," has been largely lost.

Instead we get "the official and practical America of Alexander Hamilton – the America of manufacturing and tariffs; the America of big cities, big business, big government."

No, said Borsodi:

> *"The soul of American is not to be found in the manufactures and financiers who have built its cities and factories; it is to be found in Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln; in Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry D. Thoreau; in Walt Whitman and Benjamin Tucker; in Thomas Paine and Henry George."*

Under the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Borsodi noted, the "conception of the limitations of government was officially repudiated in the United States." Nehru and the Congress Party, he added, "never labored under the handicap of a restricted and limited concept of government."

In its rejection of Gandhi, India is going the way of America. Nationalism is inconsistent with the ideal of non-violence. Government is founded on coercion, on force. And today India is a nuclear power (as is Pakistan) with the world's second largest army.

How well has that worked? India today ranks second in the number of people living in extreme poverty.

The Gifts of Asia

The gifts of Asia are in two things, said Borsodi: a way of living, and an attitude toward the mystery of life. These must not be forgotten. And, not everyone in Asia has rejected them. In it "are the seeds of salvation for the whole troubled world." Borsodi devoted several chapters to these "gifts."

The first chapter addressed Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism. While Schumacher gets the celebrity for "Buddhist Economics," Borsodi was, once again, there first with not only Buddhist but an array of eastern faiths and their influence on economics. Borsodi opened by stating that the western, Christian, sense of superiority towards Asian faiths, is a mistake. There is much we can learn from the East. He described the history and principles of Buddhism and a meeting with a Buddhist patriarch.

Borsodi said that he "went to Asia looking for ideas – ideas which might help America in its present quandary, and help, at this time of crisis, the whole world and not only Asia." Asian leaders, however, were interesting in ruling and progress. "But," he continued, "in the Buddhist countries of southern Asia, I found in Buddhism a great and neglected force." The virtues of Buddhism include: "It's realistic pessimism; its gentle metaphysics; its emphasis upon the meditative life, … its middle way of living." Above all it is tolerance. To this he added, "What is true of Buddhism is also true of Confucianism, of Taoism, and a least to a degree also to Brahmanism." He cited Gandhi's ready embrace of the principles of different faiths, and particularly in his path of non-violence.

In comparison, Borsodi found the faiths of the West, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, fall short; particularly on the virtue of tolerance. The West sees the faiths of the East as "barbarous and idolatrous superstations, naïve," but "the truth is almost the exact opposite of this." Borsodi, not a believer himself, found something profound in the East. To this line of thought he added that it is a mistake to try to do business with fanatics, whether religious or political.

The second gift of the East is the family and village. Although this is more or less universally true of all cultures before Scientism and modern industrialism, modern Individualism and modern Centralism. Both Capitalism and Communism have rejected these traditions. In the West we have forgotten the virtues of the family system. All civilizations have been based on village living and strong family. The family was extended through generations and kinship. It was imbedded in the embrace of a more extended unity in the village. The family was a production unit. The virtue of the system is security. Borsodi had presented the case of the family and small community in *Education and Living*.

Western civilization, that is European civilization, is Christian in theory. More in theory than in fact, Borsodi asserted. He made two points about western spirituality. First, Christianity has strong pagan roots. Second, modern western society has become, in Toynbee's term, "ex-Christian." We have become materialistic, secular. In a sense, he said, we have returned to our pagan roots: or rather, said Borsodi, we are not so much neo-Pagan as we are neo-Barbarian. The Pagans at least had roots in the past. "Modern man has no roots. He is at war with the past. He is truly Barbarian."

> *"He believes in only one idea: Progress. He has only one ideal: a materialistic one. But he has two ideologies – the ideology of Capitalism, and the ideology of Communism – and both of them are false.*

These two ideologies are locked in a death struggle. What is the alternative?

> *"What we need to do is neither to embrace what is false nor to be satisfied with what is half-true. What we need to do is to dedicate ourselves to what is wholly true.*
>
> *"What we need to do is to discover not something new but to rediscover what we have permitted to die. What we need to do is to substitute for our present materialist quest, the quest of the good, the true and the beautiful. We need to replace the mistaken idea of progress with the idea of living like normal human beings; we need to replace the ideal of material wealth with the ideal of education from the cradle to the grave; we need to replace the ideologies of Capitalism and Communism with the ideology of Liberty.*

Borsodi again made it clear that he was not anti-capitalist: "The Capitalism which must be abandoned is predatory Capitalism: the Capitalism which must be saved – if Liberty is to be saved – is fraternal Capitalism. …. True Capitalism is commercial, not industrial. True Capitalism is agrarian; it is rural and villagistic – not urban. … The acid test is the free market."

Do we understand what a free market actually is? Borsodi defined the dominant market as one in which some of the competitors are favored and some handicapped by law. He dealt with the problem extensively in earlier books and particularly *Prosperity and Security*. The truly free market is just and humane. It favors cooperation. Unlike socialists, Borsodi does not reject competition nor private ownership. Cooperation is voluntary, an expression of personal freedom. He cited the economics of Henry George. Borsodi blamed

nationalism as a barrier to free trade around the world. He blamed expediency. He blamed the educational system for conditioning us to abnormal behavior.

Borsodi has nothing good to say about Communism; or for that matter socialism of any form. Both are explicitly centralized economies and societies. He has little regard for utopianism: "There is no perfect social system." Utopia, like socialism, and they are typically socialistic, are rule-bound. They oversimplify reality. They provide little if any scope for individualism. We err equally with ideologies that lead to a servile society and in those that lead to the individual as an end in him(her)self. There must be a balance; not ideals but rather a practical reality. Above all, it is the well-informed individual, who is a member of a family and village (community), who must be informed and who must thoughtfully decide what is the right thing to do.

As Borsodi looked around his world he saw liberty shrinking and authority growing. Like a pandemic, this trend has spread around the world. The big lie, he wrote is "that government is good." We have been conditioned to turn to governments to solve our problems. The lie is in our ignorance. We need to re-write the social science textbooks – political science, sociology and economics. "We need textbooks which do justice to the teachings of (as already listed above) Paine and Jefferson, of Emerson and Thoreau, of Benjamin Tucker and Josiah Warren and other American protagonist of the doctrine that the government is best which governs least."

Prescription

Part II of *The Challenge of Asia* is called "Prescription." There are four chapters on the nature of the political world and what we might do about these problems. I think this is the foundation of the book. In it Borsodi further revealed a personal philosophy of life. He had expressed elements of this philosophy is previous works. I believe that this articulation of his philosophy clarified his mission with the University of Melbourne and continued to define his work through the remainder of his life. It is a succinct statement of what he believed.

The crisis of the world, he said, is political, not economic:

> *"The political ideas and political principles upon which we are relying, from top to bottom of society, are utterly inadequate. Everybody seems to be improperly equipped and inadequately educated for the task with which we are confronted. Never before in the history of the world have we had so much government; never before have we had so many laws; never before so many public officials to execute them. And never before have we had so much war, nor wars more bitter nor more bloody, nor prospects of wars as dreadful as those which we face today.*

The first truth about governments is that they are created by men. They are very human. There is nothing holy about them; nothing that claims our veneration.

The second truth is that governments rely on compulsion. They are systemized, legalized coercion.

Third, we have no choice about being governed. It is in our nature. We are social creatures.

Fourth, at worst, governments use bad means for bad ends. Too often it is seen as a necessary evil.

Fifth, government is not a country. "The truth which should never be forgotten is that government is one thing, the people over whom governments rule."

Finally, the objective of government is not liberty. As Paine wrote: "Society is produced by our wants, and government by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness positively, by uniting our affections; the later negatively by restraining our vices. Society, in every state, is a blessing; but government, even in its best state, is but a necessary evil; in its worst state, an intolerable one."

The second prescription is the "Nature of Harmony." All acts, wrote Borsodi, are either harmonious or violent. Violent acts he defined as those "that have characteristics variously describable as compulsory, coercive, forcible, belligerent, aggressive. They need not be injurious or destructive in intent; they may be, as a matter of fact, defensive and protective, but if they involve the use of force directly or indirectly, they fall into the category of violent acts."

"In contrast, all acts which can be truly describe as free, voluntary, and peaceful, fall into the category of harmonious actions. No act of government … is ever really free, voluntary and peaceful."

Harmony means things fitting together properly, that form a connected whole, that function systematically. This can mean community, society and even humanity as a whole when directed toward the common good; for the benefit of both the parts (individuals) and the whole. "If the members of a community freely and voluntarily play their proper parts so that the whole functions as it, by its nature, should, there is harmony." Pseudo-harmony doesn't apply. A synonym is cooperation. Competition, when not predatory in nature, can be harmonious. For example, in competition in games where skill is exercised and respected by all players. Competition in an actual free market can be harmonious. It is necessary.

Much of our political and economic philosophy assumes an inharmonious rivalry.

Is Violence Natural?

If man is innately violent, education is futile. Much misconduct is due to miseducation. Humans are typically violent when they are afraid or angry (often linked). We are capable of violence but there is another side to human behavior, and it can be nurtured. Right-education seeks to attain what Borsodi consider our "normal," higher nature.

Borsodi devoted a chapter to the nature of violence. He sought to provide a better understanding of it; to define it as a problem to be solved.

The root of violence is the Latin word "violare," to act with strength or force. Is there a legitimate use of force? Borsodi believed in self-defense. He believed in the defense of one's person, one's family and one's community against aggression. That does not extend to violent resistance against government or predatory trade. In many things we have the legitimate power to simply say no. We have alternatives to predatory trade. These Borsodi

described in his earlier works and these he made a clear case for through homesteading. He believed that the purpose of government was to protect people from criminal activity and, at the global level, to deprive nations of the power to make war. These principles he proposed in a peace plan written during World War II; in essence anticipating the idea of a (minimal) United Nations.

Of greater importance is the gradual evolution of society, of culture, to a more normal state of being. Again, if we develop a viable alternative to government, when people begin to take care of their own affairs at a local level, nations will fade. People need an appropriate education to provide the knowledge and skills needed for greater local self-reliance.

Borsodi went further into the nature of coercion. Governments are allowed to use coercion against their citizens. Some use this power with more enthusiasm than others. The range of coercive behavior defined as legitimate action by governments includes the power to fine, to imprison and even to deal death. Coercion is usually imposed through law and regulation rather than at the muzzle of a gun. This is true, he said, of non-governmental organizations.

There is usually latitude for nonconformity; call it eccentricity. There is also civil disobedience, and this carries the expectation of arrest and imprisonment. Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. took nonviolent protest to an inspiring level. Democratic societies, at least, provide considerable scope for protest, for opposition, and this is often highly organized. Such action requires a more or less tolerant society. Gandhi knew that he would not have prevailed against a Hitler or Stalin.

Violent protest, armed revolution, and criminal activity are outside the pale. Borsodi placed predatory economic behavior on this level. But it is legal. It is still unjust.

So, how does Borsodi go beyond this? It requires re-education. It is an evolutionary activity. It will take generations. His work was the beginning of the process. He was by no means alone is this quest, then or now.

We have the power to choose. Our unsatisfactory circumstances are simply the result of bad choice. Bad choices are typically the fault of bad education – which includes a lack thereof. As was his style, he clearly outlined both the right and wrong way to approach a problem. He leaves the choice to the reader, but it is clear that his preference, like Thoreau's, is a government that governs the least.

Liberty versus Authority

The chief problem is the conflict between the ideas of liberty and authority. Liberty is an inalienable right – it is a birthright, a natural right – not something granted. It is the right of normal human beings. No government can grant liberty, and none can deny it.

Authority is a power, not a right. The conflicts of the world are differences in ideology. Which is right? Borsodi believed that there is no justification for a faith in authority. How do we reconcile the conflict? This is the question of Re-education versus Revolution.

We have an enormous body of objective knowledge about the nature of humankind – biological, physiological, psychological; history and biography; anthropology, sociology, etc. Borsodi asked: "What does this knowledge furnish us with regard to whether man is an individual organism or a part merely of an organic collectivity? Is the individual, or is society, the unity which must be the object of consideration when we speak of man? Or is there some third unit – the family, perhaps – which is the real unit of the species of animal which zoologist call homo sapiens?"

Society is not man; it is something we invented. Society, said Borsodi, exists for man, not man for society. The family antedated society. Both family and society exist for man. The family and the individual are inseparable. Individual and family rights must come first; society and governmental powers second.

As a right, liberty carries correlative obligations – the obligation that we must all recognize the right of liberty for every human being.

It boils down to two types of ideologies, intolerant and tolerant. Intolerant ideologies he called monistic, exclusive, centralist in their goals and intolerant in their methods. He listed eight of these including: Nationalism, Colonialism, Communism and Fascism. He included fanatical religious sects. In no way can intolerance and fanaticism be good, true or beautiful.

The second group he called pluralistic and tolerant: Regionalism, Universalism, Humanism, Capitalism, Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism.

Aggressive behavior is unjustified. All war is bad, but it does not follow that no war is necessary. Defensive behavior is not aggression – the protection of rights is justified. Sometimes we must fight for what we cherish. But try Gandhi first. Gandhi knew there were limits. "The moral is plain," wrote Borsodi: "In dealing with fanatic ideas and fanatic proponents of fanaticism, speak softly but carry a big stick."

In reality, we cannot choose between authority and liberty. There is always a road between. It is the Golden Mean. That is our choice.

There is a middle way between abnegation or the use of force. It is through reason and education. "True progress – humanized progress – comes in only one way and from only one thing, *from leaning how to live, and how to deal with the problems which confront us, like normal human beings*."

At root it is, as Mark Twain said, that we know too much that just isn't true. The source of this mistruth is our system of education: school, family and other institutions. A course of action is required "which unfortunately demands an intellectual discipline … to which few of us are willing to submit ourselves."

> *"The lesson of history is there to be learned: not progress, not industry, not invention, not the machine, not science, not art, not institutions, but human cultivation, human understanding, human compassion, and human conduct are primary."*

Borsodi elaborated this thought:

> *"Rightly educated men will be neither stupidly reactionary nor blindly progressive.*
>
> *"They will be neither afraid of change nor hostile to what is old.*

"They will not be ashamed to follow, nor hesitant about leading.

"They will periodically re-examine their basic assumptions.

"They will have trained their intelligences so that they can distinguish between institutions which need reformation and those which need preservation, between institutions which should be abolished and new institutions which should be substituted in their place.

"They will have trained their emotions so that they will be abler to distinguish between knaves and honest men; between fanatics and reasonable men; between demagogues and disinterested reformers.

"Above all, they will have emancipated themselves from the twin fallacy of thinking that right institutions can produce a good society –if it is composed of, and led by, venal people; or that good people can produce a good society, no matter how frustrating the intuitions through which they try to implement their goodness.

"Finally, they will have learned that of all the virtues, none is more important than intellectual honesty.

What is right education?

- Right education cannot be achieved in the current school system. Education is more than literacy. 99% of current education is mere instruction.
- Right education considers knowledge as raw material which we use to establish our rational understanding of existence – our beliefs.
- Right education is practical. It puts ends above means. It is about values: ethical, esthetic, epistemological and teleological – training in evaluation.
- Right education not only enlightens, it also enlivens –it moves us to implement what we have learned.
- Right education involves a faith in the liberty to learn.

Confucius, in "The Great Learning," said:

"Things have their roots and their completion. Affairs have their end and their beginning. To know what is first and what is last is the beginning of wisdom.

"Those who desire to create harmony in the world must first establish order in their own communities. Wishing to establish order in their own communities, they must first regulate their own family. Wishing to regulate their own family life, they must first cultivate their own personal lives. Wishing to cultivate their personal lives, they must first set their own feelings right. Wishing to set their feelings right, they must first seek to make their own wills sincere. Wishing to make their wills sincere, they must first increase to the utmost their own understanding. Such increase in understanding comes from the extension of their knowledge of all things.

"From the greatest of men down to the masses of people, all must consider the cultivation of the personal life the foundation of everything.

Melbourne

Following his trip to Asia, between 1953 and 1957 Borsodi was intensely engaged in developing the University of Melbourne. *The Challenge of Asia* was printed by the University of Melbourne Press in 1956. Borsodi was insistent that the University of Melbourne have an international and intercultural faculty and students. In the last issue of

the *Journal of Praxiology*, a plan was developed to hold a conference about education in Asia. Borsodi carried on a correspondence with Indian leaders about the plan and got affirmative responses.

Second Trip to India

In 1958 Borsodi was invited back to India. That story is told my "The Education of the Whole Man" chapter. I needed to tell more of the story there because his planned short visit was extended. He was scheduled to visit for six weeks. He was invited to speak, was interview by the news media, and met new friends. As he traveled, lecture and engaged in a dialog with Indian leaders he attracted considerable interest.

Borsodi clearly resonated with Gandhi. From the beginning of his activist career in India, Gandhi promoted agrarian communities and worked to raise a cadre of leaders to pursue not only basic human rights for people of color but to elevate all people to a higher human potential. The iconic image of Gandhi is that of him at his spinning wheel. This image is not entirely, as often believed, a protest against the British textile industry that imported cheap Indian cotton and charged prohibitive prices for finished products. Gandhi was advocating village social and economic development. He sought local economic self-sufficiency. He sought to preserve a way of life. He vigorously resisted the path of industrialization and its consequent dehumanization.

Borsodi's involvement with India started only a few years after Indian independence and Gandhi's assassination. Despite Gandhi and his followers' work, a deep undercurrent of divisiveness and violence kept the country in an unsettled state. The separation of India and Pakistan and the subsequence war, hostile sectarian factions, rising population, extreme poverty and constant famine defined this new nation. In short, there was a lot of work to be done and Gandhi's followers continued his mission. Indian political leaders, however, were determined to make India a modern industrial nation. Borsodi's philosophy and work was attractive to the Gandhian faction. He found a natural and receptive audience in India.

The key term, the key connection between Borsodi and Gandhi, was decentralism." Borsodi was a globally recognized sage of decentralization. So too was Gandhi. His Indian supporters, and critics, challenged him to give them a succinct outline of his program. Only a few weeks after his arrival in India, and after a week at the typewriter, Borsodi completed his *Pan-Humanist Manifesto*. It was a synthesis of the ideas of Jefferson and Gandhi. It sought to humanize society, promote a social renaissance, pursue greater political liberty, if not a virtual decentralist anarchy, and economic justice in the face of capitalistic development. It offered a third alternative to capitalism and communism. The Ambala Tribune wrote that it "ranks with the great revolutionary pieces of the world."

The Manifesto

"A Pan-Humanist Manifesto" was first issued by the Libertarian Social Institute, Bombay, India, October 1958. It was a 31 page, 5½ by 8-inch pamphlet.

Pan-Humanism means: "All human beings are members of humanity, … and real social renaissance for all mankind will not come until every vestige of unilateral and

exclusive citizenship in nations is abolished and the people everywhere taught to place their obligations to humanity above those of nation-states."

The title of the pamphlet was later changed to "The Decentralist Manifesto," with some minor editorial changes, and printed in the US. It is available for download at this link[55].

Borsodi started the pamphlet with these lines:

> *A new world is being born.*
>
> *If this new world is to be a better world than the one now dying and to make possible a fuller fruition of the human spirit, then it will be very different from the Capitalist world of today, and different from the world which the dictators of Russia and China are providing, and different from the Socialist world into which most of the world is now drifting.*
>
> *Concerned and thoughtful men and women are challenged to arrest the present drift and drive into a mechanized barbarism, and to contribute to the birth of a world in which persons will be free to realize their potentialities as creative beings. Such leaders must have the courage to assert themselves and must discipline themselves to think about all the institutions essential to such a world.*

Borsodi reiterated his call for "a determining number of the thoughtful and considerate" people to arise to create the good society. It is going to take a radical change. To achieve that, a program of educational reform would have to be undertaken. A new leadership would have to form; a leadership not of warriors, kings, priest, politicians, businessmen and financiers but of "concerned and thoughtful teachers," of writers, artist, poets and even men and women in professions who "consecrate themselves to the search and realization of what is true, what is good, what is beautiful." In short, the quality minded of *This Ugly Civilization*. Above all else these gifted people must teach.

Borsodi argued for moral re-education. He described different types of instruction. Moral re-education begins in the home. The family must be normalized (optimized). It must be continued in school. It is a lifetime study. The first commandment of moral re-education is "Harmony, not Discord."

Second, the small community must be revived. The small community is essential for economic prosperity and political autonomy. It is an agricultural community. It must support the essential human social institutions.

The second section of the pamphlet addresses "Political Liberty." The function of the leader/teacher and re-organized educational institutions, it states, is to humanize all of humankind. Borsodi's fundamental political reforms included principles such as:

1. Every human being should have inalienable rights.
2. The function of governments must be held to the absolute minimum.
3. Each local community should be autonomous.
4. Collaboration between communities can be achieved through federation.

The third section the "Manifesto" is about Economic Justice. This requires opportunity. It is clear that, as Henry George asserted, land must be made available for production, not tied up in speculation. The market must be unrestricted; a collaborative

[55] *The Decentralist Manifesto* can be found at: https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B1wQ6T5I3eBVbGR0SzRaNlJBTDQ/edit.

local economy. Clearly, the centralization of power and wealth, of government and the market, must be brought to an end.

The Manifesto begins and ends with a call for leadership. There is an ideological vacuum in the world: "People everywhere are sick to death of a world which seems to have lost its bearings, which is drifting here and being driven there." Borsodi cited a long list of illness of modern society. Neither capitalism nor communism supplies this need.

He wrote of this leadership: "They are looking for something fresh and new; something which would give this tired old world a purpose and a meaning worthy of the spirit of man." The time is ripe for a new idea:

> *"In the final analysis, if mankind is to be saved from the mechanized and materialistic barbarism into which the free world is drifting, and the rest of the world being driven, if democracy is to be realized and liberty saved, if men are to be taught to live rationally and humanely, and the people persuaded to make the far-reaching reform needed, the educators of mankind must be challenged to furnish the leadership the crises calls for.*

"A Pan-Humanist Manifesto" excited a great deal of interest in India. There was then a crisis in the higher educational system; a lot of leaders wanted change and they wanted to avoid further westernization of the curriculum. Borsodi advocated a natural leader, a teacher. He had done that at Melbourne. His Indian friends wanted more about this, they wanted a curriculum, so they formed an association and invited Borsodi to stay in India. In two years, he completed *The Education of the Whole Man*. The book was printed in India. It provided a well-documented university-level program for producing a determining leadership.

Chapter 10:

The Education of the Whole Man Book I

As related elsewhere, Borsodi was invited to India in 1958. He had been laying the groundwork for that visit since at least when the University of Melbourne published his book *The Challenge of Asia* in 1956. About then he began planning what he hoped would be a University of Melbourne sponsored conference on education in Asia. He had a network of friends he had made during his visit in 1952 with whom he had remained in close touch. He also wrote letters to a number of Indian educational leaders and many responded favorably to the idea of the conference. His return, and this would not be his last visit to India, was inevitable. He arrived in August 1958.

Borsodi was invited to India by B. D. Patel, Vice-Chancellor of Sardar Vallabhabhai Vidyapeeth, a rural university set up on Gandhian principles, some 75 km (47 miles) southeast of Gandhi's ashram located in the Sabarmati suburb of Ahmedabad. Borsodi was invited for a six-weeks lecture and study tour. Soon after he arrived, he was asked to describe decentralism, a subject dear to his Gandhian friends, and produced his "Pan-Humanist (Decentralist) Manifesto" in October 1958. I have described that document in my chapter on India but the full text can be found at this link[56]. In it he called for a cultural renaissance led by teachers. He started the pamphlet with these lines:

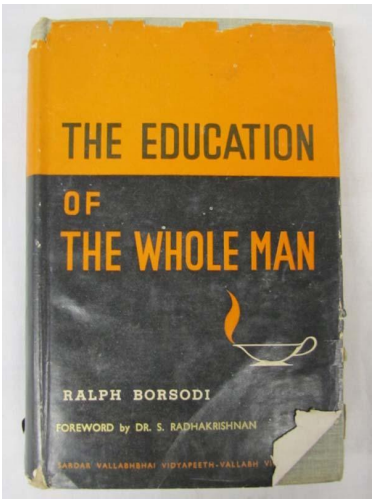
> *A new world is being born.*
>
> *If this new world is to be a better world than the one now dying and to make possible a fuller fruition of the human spirit, then it will be very different from the Capitalist world of today, and different from the world which the dictators of Russia and China are providing, and different from the Socialist world into which most of the world is now drifting.*
>
> *Concerned and thoughtful men and women are challenged to arrest the present drift and drive into a mechanized barbarism, and to contribute to the birth of a world in which persons will be free to realize their potentialities as creative beings. Such leaders must have the courage to assert themselves, and must discipline themselves to think about all the institutions essential to such a world.*

This document begins and ends with a call for leadership, a leadership not of warriors, kings, priest, politicians, businessmen and financiers but of "concerned and thoughtful teachers," of writers, artist, poets and even men in women in professions who "consecrate themselves to the search and realization of what is true, what is good, what is beautiful." In short, the quality minded individual he described in *This Ugly Civilization*. Above all else, these gifted people, whatever their profession, must teach.

How we achieve decentralization is through education, learning, and moral re-education. It is also about how to revive the small community. It is about how the small community is nested within the larger human social system; an ethos Borsodi called "pan-humanism." All human beings, all around the world, he asserted, have the same right

[56] Pan-Humanist Manifesto: https://hgarchives.files.wordpress.com/2017/10/borsodi-a-decentralist-manifesto-1978.pdf

to a quality life, to a just and secure form of life that is denied them by the predatory practices of established and dysfunctional urban-industrial social institutions.



Chancellor Patel invited Borsodi for an extended stay at the university to develop a curriculum to train these teachers. By the fall of 1960 Borsodi completed the manuscript. After two years of strenuous work, Borsodi, age 72, became seriously ill and was hospitalized. Released from the hospital he tried to return to work in India but was soon back in the hospital. He then returned to the US, to Exeter, New Hampshire where his wife Clare had found them a new home, for convalescence. *The Education of the Whole Man* was published in India by Sardar Vallabhabhai Vidyapeeth in 1963. The book can be download at no cost at this link[57]

The Education of the Whole Man is an astonishing work for any scholar, let alone a man in his seventies. It displayed an incredible range of knowledge. Borsodi was clearly well read. He seems to have had a virtual photographic memory. As one might expect of an economist and accountant, he worked easily with numbers. He was a systematic note taker. He had the capacity to organize ideas. He had the rare talent for managing a huge mass of detailed information, extract the key ideas, defining each and carefully classifying all of them into appropriate categories. He would then go on to explain each idea. The scope is broad because it is about the whole (wo)man. The book is daunting perhaps because it is a doorway into an incredible mind; a vast landscape of ideas; and it is an original work. It is, I believe, his masterwork on education. In it he provides the theory of his model of an integral, problem-centered approach to learning that develops our optimum capacity to not only live fully as a human being should but to lead others to this type of life.

Borsodi's objective was to stimulate thought. Before you can get an answer to your problem you have to ask the right question. Our major failure, then and now, is that we too often ask the wrong questions. It doesn't matter what answer you get, how logical your reasoning, how thorough your research, the answer, even if it might be absolutely true, to the wrong question, won't solve the problem that you really have. He formalized that method at the University of Melbourne and with this book gives it full articulation.

Once you have the question, you also have to have the facts and figures. They need to be accurate and true, empirical and concrete. The problems are about life, not about abstractions. Being universal, those problems have been addressed everywhere in the world since our species first appear. We have a vast accumulation of knowledge to draw from. But it must be made accessible.

Borsodi provided a structure for his system and it was elaborate and detailed. There are two books in this one volume, 39 dense chapters. The first, the subject of the first part

[57] *The Education of the Whole Man* free pdf download: https://research.library.kutztown.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1000&context=solbooks.

of this chapter, is a general treatise on his educational model. It contains nine of those chapters.

A major feature of the system is that it is integral. The West, Borsodi observed, has lost the idea that all subjects are each simply different aspects of human nature. We have lost it over the course of modernizing education. We fail to solve problems in large part because we take them out of context. Specialized, narrow, knowledge, while a powerful tool for analysis, simply cannot resolve the problems of life. We need an integral system and that requires an integral education. That is even truer today, as digital technology has made our lives far more complex.

Regardless of how you cut the deck, there is always a senior problem. The senior problem is how to guide human action. The key to that is the problem of education: how to shape and inform the character of the actor. The first part of the book provides the key principles. The second section addressed particular aspects of education: 30 chapters worth.

Drawing in no small part from the inspiration of Gandhi, Borsodi proposed his curriculum for the elevation of men and women most receptive to uplifting the human race who in turn would become the teachers in their own communities. This was, as noted, Borsodi's model of leadership: the teacher.

Borsodi came to be honored with the title Acharya by his Indian friends. The term means a learned person who teaches by example. Such a person is considered to be a spiritual leader. It was the same title bestowed upon Gandhi's spiritual successor, Vinoba Bhave. As seen below, he was highly respected by Indian leaders. It suggests a leader in one of the three paths of yoga; the contemplated path, the path of study to seek enlightenment. That was essentially the role Borsodi followed in India. I say he was honored with this title, but it might be more correct to say that it was a term that described his behavior throughout his life. But we should not forget that Borsodi, like Gandhi and Bhave, was principally a practitioner of karma yoga. They were men of action who, nonetheless, like King was doing as leader of the Civil Rights Movement, drew on a deep well of knowledge and understanding of the human condition.

Forward

The Forward to *The Education of the Whole Man* was written by S. Radhakrishnan. This was an extraordinary endorsement. Radhakrishnan was not only a renowned scholar but also a statesman; the first Indian Vice-President (1952 – 1962) and had recently been elected as India's second President. This is a brief summary of his endorsement of the book:

> *"Science and technology, literature and art, philosophy and religion are varied manifestations of the spirit of man. They do not contradict one another but complement one another."*
>
> *"In the name of science and rationalism many of our societies have broken off their connection with the past tradition. Their lives have become rootless. We have to grow our roots again. We have to combine ancient tradition with modern knowledge.*

"The development of the human individual makes for the uniqueness of the individual. This uniqueness contributes to the fellowship of human beings. It leads one to the creative realization of the unity of mankind.

It was about this time that C.P. Snow wrote his highly popular book, *The Two Cultures*. In that book Snow described the chasm that had grown between the sciences and humanities. It was also about this time that general systems theory, which treats knowledge holistically, was becoming known. Borsodi was clearly in the front ranks of this dialog.

Preface

The Preface was written by Babubhai J. Patel, Vice-Chancellor of Sardar Vallabhbhai Vidyapeeth. This was the first book published on the subject of education by the university. It represented an engagement of Borsodi with an effort to design an appropriate system of education. Patel said that he did not need to dwell at length on the merits of the book. There was a general consensus on that. He thanked Borsodi for allowing the university to publish the book for no royalties in India.

Borsodi's Preface

This book, Borsodi wrote, actually begin in 1944 when he started to write *Education and Living*. This introduction to the whole undertaking, he added, is being finished seventeen years later in my two "hermitages" in India, "my Summer hermitage in Simla and my Winter hermitage in Ahmedabad."

He began with a challenge to his Indian friends. They must choose a national destiny: Gandhi's or Western industrialization. Borsodi believed that India might be Earth's last real chance to create an agrarian national culture.

Borsodi noted that the book is addressed to "educators." By that he does not mean professional educators only; it does not mean professional teachers, scholar or intellectuals, but rather all those who seek to positively influence the growth and well-being of those around them, and who have four qualities which distinguish them from those to whom this work will be meaningless.

1. They are thoughtful about what they learn.
2. They are concerned. They realize that this is an age of crisis.
3. They have the courage to pioneer opening up new territory.
4. They are dedicated to make a difference; to be heard.

Borsodi made it clear that he was seeking a revolution to humanize humanity. It will not be accomplished by political means but through a slow process of reeducation. It will be achieved by a minority of true leaders, teachers.

He offered five suggestions related to his work, which he believed would come to sixteen volumes:

1. Each volume would be complete unto itself.
2. This is the introductory volume and it should be read first. In it he made clear "both my purpose in making the study, and the method which I pursed in making it."

3. The meaning and significance of the series cannot be learned in just one volume but by studying several.
4. Each chapter begins with a quotation which was carefully selected and should be "not merely read; they should be articulated."
5. The charts need to be studied carefully. They were compiled from the observation of about 8,000 "specific human actions." The charts represent a systematic analysis of these actions. He hoped that when detailed studies of each of the major subdivisions of the problems has been made that "the social sciences will begin to approach the physical sciences in their utility."

He concluded his preface with this statement:

> *Only by making such decisions rationally and wisely, can we live a genuinely good life, contribute to good living on the part of our families, our neighbours, and the whole society of which we are a part, and so contribute to the create of a better life for everybody.*

The Education of the Whole Man, Section I: The humanization of Humanity – An Introduction to the Study of the Fourteen Basic Problems of Man and Society.

There are nine chapters and six charts in this "section." I think a better word would be "book." It runs just short of 200 pages.

Borsodi prefaced this section with several quotes of which I believe these are particularly pertinent:

- Plato: Seven years of silent inquiry are needed for a man to learn the truth but fourteen in order to learn how to make it known to his fellowmen.
- Nietzsche: Shame, Shame, Shame – that is the history of man.
- Sir Richard Livingstone: *the history of mankind might be described by a cynic as a series of splendid expeditions towards no goal at all, led by men who have all the gifts of leadership except a sense of direction, and every endowment for achieving their ends except the knowledge of ends worth achieving.*

Chapter I: The Challenge in India

The opening quotes suggest that this "is the hour of fate." I believe Borsodi made that idea very clear in his *The Challenge of Asia*. He believed that Asia, and especially India, was the last hope for retaining a traditional, agrarian culture; one that had been lost in the West due to industrialization and urbanization.

Borsodi related that when he was invited to India in 1958 for a speaking tour organized by a retired industrialist, active in the Indian reform movement, R. B. Lotvala of Bombay, who had made speaking engagements for him including at various universities. These university included Sardar Vallabhbhai Vidyapeeth, a school, Lotvala said, that was dedicated not to the usual program of training students for city careers but rather for "a social renaissance through rural revival."

An entire community had been built in a rural area by Bhailalbhai D. Patel, a close associate of Gandhi's, with the university at its center. It was established in 1955. Its motto is: Character and Conduct are the Fruits of Learning. This was very much as Borsodi had

envisioned his agrarian community at which the School of Living was the center. It is what he had proposed for St. John's College in 1942.

Borsodi spent three days at the university. He made a strong statement about what was lacking in higher education in the US and the western world. He wrote: "I feel strongly about the matter. … I believe the free world is succumbing to the onslaughts of a modernized barbarism, …" in short, massive industrialism.

As noted above, in his "Pan-Humanist Manifesto," published in October 1958, Borsodi had made a strong case for both a cultural renaissance, the role of education and the importance of an influential group of teachers. Borsodi was invited to return to Sardar Vallabhbhai Vidyapeeth to develop what he considered a curriculum for mobilizing this renaissance. He wrote:

> *"Only a really adequate method of educating the whole man which is free from national, ideological and religious presuppositions, prejudgments and prejudice can make possible a rational and human evaluation of conflicting alternative schools of thought about human problems; it alone can end the present drift into ever more confusing darkness; it alone can create a new elite among the engulfing barbarians and provide the inspiration to make its members resist every group and every movement which tries either to persuade people to accept or to forcibly impose upon them false and mistaken doctrines like those of limitless wealth and centralized power."*

Borsodi credited Robert M. Hutchins, who "I know personally and have long admired," former Chancellor of the University of Chicago, who with the help of Mortimer Adler, "introduced a general education programme based upon the study of the hundred greatest books of the Western world."

Referring, I believe, to Hutchins' *The Higher Learning in America*, Borsodi wrote "that he called for a crusade to procure nothing less than 'a moral, intellectual and spiritual revolution throughout the world. The whole scale of values by which our society lives must be reversed.'" Borsodi clearly agreed. He added that the problem was that higher education in America was turning out specialist preoccupied with personal success, "but lacking in a philosophy of life and often contemptuous of moral and spiritual values."

However, Borsodi did not think Hutchins had gone far enough. The study of the great ideas was a good start but, he wrote: "I once told him that if he would make the study of the greatest books of the *whole* world – of East and not only the West – a part of his curriculum, I would like his prescription better."

Borsodi wrote that his own work took a different direction. He had developed "a method of integrating all knowledge so that it could be effectively directed toward the solution of actual problems with which every individual has to deal throughout … life." This method he named "problem-integrated education."

Borsodi reiterated that knowledge had become highly specialized and that you cannot integrate specialized knowledge. You can, however, integrate knowledge around the universal problems and through the study of these, produce a whole person:

> *"For in the final analysis every science and every field of knowledge can be used as a basis for the resolution of one of these basic problems. If the problem is clearly defined, the student is equipped with a method of fitting everything he learns – and every special field of knowledge – into its proper place in his philosophy of life."*

Problem-integration starts with the study and understanding of the fourteen universal problems of living. Borsodi suggested that beginning college students should first take an introductory "survey of the whole field of human knowledge and wisdom" before entering their regular course of study. It should, he wrote: "lead them to discover that learning – not politics, nor religion, and certainly not business and money making – is the answer to the problems with which they will have to deal in the new world which is now being born." And when they finish their final examines, he proposed that they attend a series of seminars on the fourteen basic problems. This is in essence the graduate-level curriculum he had developed at the University of Melbourne. It required but a single term to complete. Of great importance, they should come away from their education with "a sense of dedication to the task of building a better world and a better life." He emphasized that the universities of India could "humanize and cultivate men and women who will be able to measure up to the challenge of our times."

I should add that in a speech Borsodi gave in India in 1958, "Destiny's Challenge to India," he was reported by a local journal to have said:

> *"Specialization is essential in science. It is essential in the operation of an industrial civilization built upon science. But specialization ignores the necessity for educating the whole man. To produce a whole man, and not mere lop-sided specialists, some method must be used which gives him knowledge of that which he actually needs to know in order to deal rationally and humanely with the problems he has to face. There is a special reason why I believe the best kind of general education is needed in Indian colleges at this time. That India should produce such philosophically equipped leaders is not merely an Indian but a world necessity. In this world it seems to me, India may be challenged in the same way that America was challenged after the II World War. History seems to be setting the stage for a drama in which the leading role may be played by India.*

Borsodi said that he did not think China or the Middle East, because of their militancy, could achieve what India could. He continued:

> *The question which has an overwhelming interest for me is: "What is India doing to prepare its leaders for the role which destiny seems to be calling upon them to play? What I am anxious to learn is what the educators of India are doing to produce leaders who will not prove as inadequate as have the present leaders of America?"*

That journal suggested this speech was one of the reasons Borsodi was invited to an extended stay in India. As we will see, he was far from alone in this vision about India's future and the role of education in achieving its destiny.

In short, Borsodi thought that India could be a last chance for right education. He noted that the universities in America paid no attention to Hutchins or to his own plea expressed in *This Ugly Civilization*. He saw then that the world's center of gravity was shifting to the East. The domination of Europe will come to an end. So too, inevitably, that of America.

He had more to say about the lost legacy of America. In short, at the end of World War II there was a global expectation that America would provide moral leadership for the world. "But its leaders were not morally, intellectually and ideologically prepared for the role which they were called upon to play." The intentions might have been good but good intentions are not enough. They had nothing of substance to offer. Into that vacuum stepped the Soviet Union – a revolutionary alternative – and the Cold War began.

To support his claim of the rise of Asia, Borsodi commented that during the European Dark Ages there were three great civilization in the Orient: Saracenic civilization spread from India to Spain, in China and Japan, and also in India. Then Europe came to power again (drawing heavily on the knowledge of the East) and colonized the world.

There is still a vacuum to be filled and it will not be filled by America or Russia. It cannot be filled by science and technology. Borsodi wrote:

> *"The situation calls for emphasis upon ethics and high ideals; it calls for equipment with the liberal arts and a deep love of the humanities; it calls for philosophy and not only technology; it calls for inspiring the rising generation with a vision above the consideration of purely personal gain; it calls for cultivating in them such devotion to humanity as a whole that they rise not only above the customary preoccupations of the day but all merely local, provincial and national interests."*

Is this just the boy crying Wolf! Borsodi asked? No, this was a subject studied by a number of leading contemporary minds. There was at that time a large popular literature addressing the rising state of crisis in the world from many disciplines and beginning even before the beginning of the twentieth century. Borsodi listed many of these writers from Nietzsche to Gandhi and other Indian leaders. He wrote of Gandhi: "to whom not only Communism and Capitalism but Industrialism itself was anathema." Borsodi was brought up on the work of Henry George, one of the leaders in American and then global social and economic transformation.

Borsodi cited "my friend" Pitirim A. Sorokin's *The Crisis of Our Age* (1941). Sorokin was a Soviet exile and founder of Harvard's department of sociology. He was not only a leading sociologist but had led an adventurous and perilous early life in Russia. I've written about him elsewhere. He completed an acclaimed study of human history. It was a cyclical theory of history based on a close study of the values of all societies through history resulting in four large volumes of historical data and analysis.

The basic tenants of Sorokin's theory of history were used to write *The Crisis of Our Age*. *The Crisis of Our Age* was written for a popular audience and was widely read. In it, Sorokin described the process of how civilizations break down with particular emphasis on the status of our current civilization. This book, I should stress, remains highly relevant in our twenty-first century. Civilization are founded on moral ideals. The decline of civilizations occurs with the inevitable rise of a materialistic, sensate, culture.

The crisis is one of modern times; since the rise of science in Europe. For millennia human beings turned to religion as an ultimate source of authority. The founders of science were themselves profoundly religious men. The Church diligently resisted the progress of scientific authority, but the turning point came, according to Borsodi, not with the dawn of science in Europe in the sixteenth century but in 1859 with Darwin's *The Origin of Species* and later *The Descent of Man*.

Darwin was not just about the end of religious authority, what Nietzsche called "the death of God," but also with the death of tradition; with "a form of ultimate knowledge which had in one form or another reigned supreme over the minds and in the lives of mankind for fifty thousand years which was then done to death." A new god arose, Science. With science came technology and industry and a fundamental transformation of the way we live.

I would note also the scientific models developed by Marx and Freud. I would put the philosopher Nietzsche in this group that radically redefined our understanding of the nature of the world and of the human condition.

Science is a vengeful god. It abhors all that is not material, not quantity; not numbers. Its more pervasive doctrine is "scientism" – the application of the scientific method to fields that do not readily admit to experimental verification, like sociology (or for that matter economics). Science has done a lot of good, but it has also produced horrific weapons of mass destruction. Today we know more of how it has transformed the biosphere itself at great threat to civilization and life in general. And it has raised our lives to a level of complexity that is simply incomprehensible; a state that has further destabilized society at all levels.

A serious problem is that science sees itself as utterly detached. Science has an "antipathy to values" – there is no right and wrong, good and bad; no truth, beauty and goodness. Borsodi believed we must have a "science of axiology," a science of values, a position he had defended at Melbourne. He wrote: "I venture to make the positive assertion that the science of axiology is infinitely more important to the welfare of mankind than the sciences of physics, chemistry, mechanics and electronics combined." To this he added: "Into this axiological and educational vacuum, a new venal and completely amoral priesthood – the devotees and votaries of the Advertising World – have marched." About which he wrote: "It is the advertising men who tell us what to desire from day to day, and therefore to what we should devote our lives. They tell us what sort of food and fashions we should want; what sort of electrical appliances; what sort of automobiles; what sort of air-conditioned homes. They tell us what to read, what sort of music to like, what sort of drama to consider worth seeing." Advertising drives technological innovation. Advertising developed its own science of motivational research. With it they have supplanted traditional moral values "which the Chinese called *li* or fraternity, and the Japanese *bushido* or loyalty, and the Hindus *dharma* or duty," with self-interested, acquisitive, material values. He described this process in considerable detail in several of his earlier books.

I would remind the reader that Borsodi was an expert on advertising and commercial economics; as well as a pioneering consumer advocate and then critic of the commercial/industrial system about which he had a profound understanding and working expertise. In other chapters I have describe the long series of his works included an unpublished manuscript on economics written at the end of his life. The digital era, of course, has added new dimensions to the problem.

"What it calls for," our response to this chaotic age, Borsodi wrote, "is an educational revolution. It calls upon the scientific world to stop its insensate preoccupation with the physical and to replace that with the study of what is human. It calls upon the Scientific World for the development of the neglected normative sciences, and upon the Education World for an integrated curriculum based upon them."

This revolution is not a new idea. Borsodi observed that Nietzsche, in his *Genealogy of Morals* (1887), "was the first to foresee the full meaning of the discovery of the theory of evolution. Nietzsche recognized that it was the biology of Darwin and not the astronomy of Copernicus, the mechanics of Galileo or the physics of Newton that signalized the final

triumph of Science; he was the first to call attention to the fact that it was Darwin's linking of man with nature and his divorce of man from a mythical Creator, which had completely deserted the foundation of the values by which man had lived from time immemorial."

The revolution is one in education; and education has failed in this mission. Borsodi reiterated: "What the situation calls for is not an economic nor a political nor a social revolution, but an educational revolution. A new program of education is what the crisis of the times calls for."

Education is about the ideas we have. Borsodi wrote: "Ideas, like minds and bodies, can be either healthy or diseased." Many ideas related to industrialism and urbanism "have all the appearance of health and rationality, but which if carefully examined, prove to be exactly the opposite."

"For ideas are subjective, not objective in nature. They are in the souls, or if you prefer the minds of men, not outside them. They move men, even when they refer to things which are objective and outside men. Men tend to think that it is they who possess ideas. But the fact is the other way about." For example: "That men should believe that mere wealth, unlimited means for material and sensate gratification of their desires, can produce a good society and make a good life possible, seems fantastic. … Yet this idea that men should devote themselves to the creation of a way of life which aims simply at the enjoyment of as much wealth as possible, is the idea common to both Capitalism and Communism, the ideologies responsible for the political crisis of our age." He concluded this line with: "… maximum wealth and complete industrialization … are twin social pathologies."

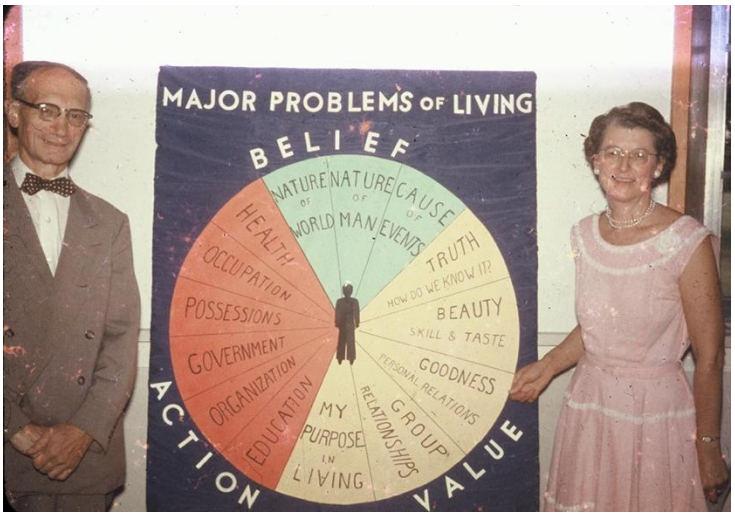
The options and clear choice:

> *"There are, however, only four ways of satisfying human wants: first, by making what we want with our own hands; second, by trading what we have in surplus and do not want for what we do want; third, obtaining what we want from someone who has it to bestow as a gift; and fourthly, appropriating or stealing what we want."*
>
> *"There is only one way of making clear the truth about false gods of this kind, and that is through right-education. The miscalculation which has exalted the pursuit of wealth and abundance, must be ended; the mis-education which has enabled Panarchists to conceal the iron fist they wield in the velvet glove of demagogic promises, must be exposed.*
>
> *"So long as education is fragmentized, the whole truth about man and society will never become known."*

Chapter II: The Nature of This Study

Borsodi wrote that he had first started working on what became the problem-centered method in 1935. He started by making notes about the problems he and friends encountered at the School of Living. He made notes on 4 x 6-inch cards. At around a thousand of these cards he began to sort and classify them. They were not abstract problems but those of individuals; real problems to be overcome. This distinction between abstract problems and real problems became a keystone of his system. This was a turning point for him. He was accustomed to working with problems in the abstract. His "Eureka!" moment came with the realization that "A problem of living, I found, was always a question

of how to act; it was always a question about what an individual should do or feel or believe during some interval, long or short, in his life."



The next task for him was to translate abstract knowledge into concrete knowledge and practical solutions. The first step in this process was the problem of the fragmented, compartmentalized and specialized nature of knowledge, especially in modern time. His approach to classification is covered in more detail in chapter eight. In brief, however, he developed a taxonomy of problems. Inspired by biological classification, he grouped problems by common traits. Eventually he developed first five then eight problem statements. In 1940 he presented a seminar on eleven basic problems of living at Oberlin University. By 1957, at the University of Melbourne, there were 14. We can see how they were organized in this photo taken that year, with Borsodi and Mildred Loomis, by Grace Lefever.

The Education of the Whole Man addresses how the problem centered system is to be developed: "For while it deals with the immediate problem of the right organization of education, it deals in fact with the problem of how to live a genuinely civilized life so that civilized life of that kind will become possible for the whole of mankind." And that is a problem of education.

This leads to the question of where to start. Do you work from the top down or from the bottom up? Borsodi is clear that it is not a mass educational effort that he has in mind. It starts with individuals, and particularly a small minority, who have the desire and will to take on this responsibility. But it can start with a common school, such as the Danish folk schools, or a university.

Elitist? That depends upon interpretation. In a free society every person has a right to the opportunity to be all they can be. Some seek to rise to unusual heights in all fields. Yes, there are those with genius but there are a great many with gifts – perhaps a far larger number than we are accustomed to seeing under the current system.

The book is thus addressed to teachers as he defined them above. The teacher has no political or economic power. They lead by example, not by authority. Students choose their teachers. What is needed is a new type of teacher, a new approach to education that is designed to humanize, to bring out the best of everyone. This is what the root of "education," the Latin word "educare," which means "to bring out."

Chapter III: The Nature of Humanization

Borsodi defined "humanization," as "the process by which human beings are taught to live and to act like normal humane beings." The term "normal," he reiterated, means "optimal." It's what we could be if freed of all the arbitrary restraints and oppressions of life. He goes more into this in Chapter 7, but the complete description of normal living, for the individual, family and community, is found in *Education and Living*, which can be downloaded at this link[58]. You can also find that description summarized in my chapter about "Education and Living."

We have, Borsodi asserted, "no vocabulary for discussing education worthy of the name." He cited a then highly popular author, Harry Overstreet's, *The Mature Mind*. The mature mind is the mind of a humanized human being wrote Overstreet. He also cited his friend Stringfellow Barr's (a founder and former president of St. John's College) essay "Let's Join the Human Race." To be human means not parochial enculturation but a sense of the essence of the human race as a species.

We are not born human. We are born, as Bucky Fuller put it, naked, helpless and hungry. Our humanization begins at the mother's breast. Borsodi described the stages of life in *Education and Living* and he will again in the second part of *The Education of the Whole Man*. The early education of this potential human being is in the hands of the mother and family. It is primarily emotional. Mistakes made in education at this period, as Freud made clear, are enormously influential throughout life. Turning the child over to the school at a too tender age is also a major mistake. The foundation must be laid in the home before the school does what it does best.

Chapter IV: The Nature of Basic Problems

Since Borsodi wrote this book we have learned a great deal about the human brain. Nature developed brains to solve problems. The human brain, a product of four billion years of natural evolution, takes this to a whole new level. We are a self-aware species with unique abilities to think. Since brains are individualized, so is problem solving. Korzybski showed us how that works and how to use our nervous systems to best advantage. Individual initiative, I must stress, is a core principle of Borsodi's system. It's not that we don't work together. The point is, that to have a fully functional society, we must each use our own brain and our own heart to resolve problems. As Borsodi made very clear, all problems are essentially personal.

Problems can be defined either as cases – particular problems that affect us, or classes of problems – recurrent cases with similar properties. The latter are generalizations; abstractions. Korzybski, I should point out, made the distinction between "case" and abstraction clear. Learning is in large part the ability to generalize our understand of life and its problems. The more we learn about our more immediate problems the more we understand about resolving others in the same class. And it is, above all, important to solve our problems thoughtfully rather than instinctually.

[58] Education and Living free pdf download: https://research.library.kutztown.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1001&context=solbooks.

By this process we arrive at what Borsodi classified as universal problems of living; the number of which was then fourteen. What is important, he emphasized, is that these are universal in terms that they apply everywhere and in every time.

Again, however, it must be stressed that it is the individual who solves problems, not collectives. True, custom, tradition and dictators and other political "leaders" may define how those problems are addressed but the solution may be worse than inadequate. That applies to science, technology, industry and advertising as well as social and political issues.

Borsodi wrote to this point:

> *"Regardless of what the nature of the social problem of which social action is a resolution, every social action is in the final analysis nothing but what the individuals of which society is composed in fact do. Only individuals initiate, only individuals oppose or acquiesce in what society is said to do … Living individuals may accept what individuals in the past have done about a social problem, but if they do, their acceptance, just as would be their opposition, is an individual action of their own.*

In these terms, Borsodi considered society as no more than a fiction, albeit a legal fiction. A society is no more or less than what individuals decide it will be and by what they do or don't do.

Borsodi grouped the fourteen distinctive problem categories into two classes: " problems of thought or of purely mental 'action,' and problems of motor-action – problems which involve the practice or implementation of what is felt or believed." There are seven in each class. He depicted this classification as Chart I.

Borsodi begins his elaboration of this framework with the seven problems of motor-action, of implementation; that cannot be disposed of by thought alone. These seven problems are designated as praxiologic. He gave a paragraph description of each of these. They can be, he noted, divided into forms that are predominantly personal and those that are predominately social. These are:

1. The most personal of these problems is the Psycho-Physiological Problem given that it emphasizes both mental and physical health; and particularly the maintenance or restoration of health.
2. The second is the Occupational Problem; or how we spend our time. It includes everything that occupies our time and not just work.
3. Then comes the Possessional Problem, again primarily personal but, as with occupation, with increasing social significance.
4. The Institutional Problem is the first that is primarily social in nature. It includes the maintenance, reform or abolition of existing institution and the establishment of new,

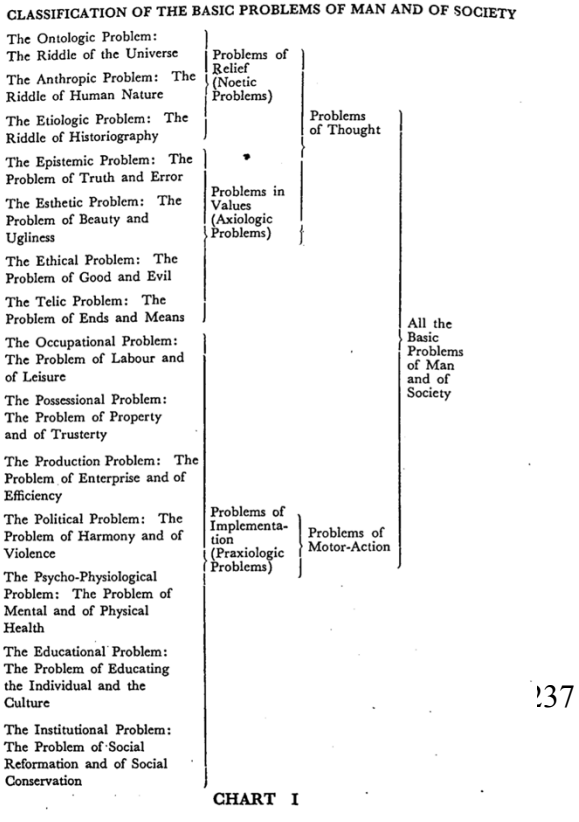


CHART I

normal, institutions to replace those that are abnormal.

5. The Production Problem concerns the organization of enterprises of all types; which are *voluntary*.
6. The Political Problem concerns the organization of enterprises that are essentially not voluntary in nature. It involves the use of force and compulsion of various kinds.
7. Finally, is the Educational Problem which "is personal in application but both personal and social in its consequences."

The Seven Basic Problems of Thought, which can be disposed of through study and reflection only, fall into two categories: Problems of Belief (Noetic Problems) and Problems of Values (Axiologic Problems).

The Seven Basic Problems of Thought share in common "the fact that they can be resolved by thinking to a conclusion. "The three problems of belief can only be satisfied by hypothetical conclusions, or "to the best of my knowledge and belief." The four problems of values, however, "call for conviction, for felt judgments, for conclusion as to the validity of which there is such conviction as to warrant their being considered absolute." Yet while values may be held absolute by some, they are not held equally by all. That does not mean that values pass the test of falsifiability: You may not be able to prove they are wrong. What is wrong is compulsion in their acceptance.

Curiously, science is also, at its roots, a problem of belief. It had by then become clear that even scientific laws are based on untested assumptions. That became abundantly clear in Kurt Godel's incompleteness theorem which became more widely known during the late 1940s. Relativity and quantum physics also turned classical science on its head. Newtonian, mechanistic, deterministic science was an interpretation that has been found faulty in many respects. Quantum physics introduced the idea of probability rather than deterministic certainty as proposed by Newton and colleagues. Other limitations in basic scientific assumptions were becoming clear. Russell and Whitehead, for example, worked exhaustively to probe the structure and function of mathematics.

Borsodi prefaced his description of the problems of thought with an emphasis on the necessity of integrating knowledge; the objective of Right Education:

> *" … the education of the whole man – is impossible if the individual is not taught how to integrate all the knowledge he acquires, all the bodies of knowledge or ideologies embodied in the arts and science, the religions and the philosophies of which he becomes aware, in terms of these seven problems of thought."*

The basic problems of belief, noetic problems, defined as ideas gasped by the intellect alone, may be briefly describe as:

1. Ontologic Problems are about what to believe about the nature of nature – the nature of the world we find ourselves in. At base it comes down to the belief that either it operates by natural law or by some supernatural principle.
2. The Anthropic Problem is about beliefs or assumptions about the nature of human nature. That includes both how we relate to other human beings and what we think about an immortal soul.

3. The Etiologic Problem is about beliefs in the causation of events. What causes things to change? What can we say about social change, the rise and fall of civilizations and the life and death of individuals?

The Four Basic Problems of Values, something largely ignored by modern higher education, Borsodi designated as Axiologic problems. The Greek root "axio" means "worthy."

1. Epistemic Problems are about the nature of knowledge itself. These are preliminary to how we inculcate our values.
2. Esthetic Problems concern the beauty and ugliness in all the arts. "The ultimate Esthetic Problem is that of inculcating a love for the beautiful and a revulsion for what is ugly." It is more emotional than intellectual.
3. The Ethical Problem concerns the nature of good and evil. This one Borsodi defined as primarily an intellectual problem – one that requires scientific rationality rather than merely a subjective foundation. In the end, however, is the emotional issue of the love of good and the hatred of evil.
4. The Telic Problem concerns the purpose of life. What are our ultimate ends, in contrast to the means? "Without formulating the needs to which life should be devoted, there is no rational basis for choosing among means and methods of living." Without this, the individual and society are adrift.

Modern education concentrates on the occupational problem. It is vocational. It is superficial. Borsodi closes this chapter with this thought:

> *"Without a comprehensive concept of the nature of human action – of all activities and not only those concerned with employment – the curriculum will never make proper provisions for the education of a whole man; the necessity for providing leadership not only in the school but in every area of living in which education takes place will not be recognized; the concentration on methods of teaching which deal with the conscious mind – the intelligence – will continue, and the necessity for methods of teaching which deal with the emotions will continue to be ignored."*

Chapter V". The Nature of Basic Ideologies

The solution to problems is always found in "ideas, ideals and ideologies." What distinguishes human beings from animals, whose lives are defined by self-preservation and self-reproduction, by instinct, is that humans alone are capable of self-expression and self-realization. Only we can pursue the good, the beautiful and the true. We are not only capable of ideas, but throughout history the lives of human beings have been profoundly shaped by them. And there are a lot of them; often in conflict.

What are ideas, ideals and ideologies? Borsodi defines and explains each. At root, all three terms come from the Greek work "idein," meaning "to see."

Ideas

For Plato, ideas existed only outside of the actual world. They were perfect forms which were represented imperfectly in the world we live in. Borsodi did not consider such "archetypes" as ideas. For him ideas do exist in the human mind. Further, an idea is about a class of things, not particular things. The room around you is not an idea, it is an experience. But a "room" is an idea, as is a "house" or a "car." Ideas are abstractions that

refer to the quality of things. By these qualities we "classify" ideas. Borsodi further distinguished between "notions" and ideas. Notions are vague. An idea must be very clearly formulated[59]. Borsodi further illustrates this with his observance that most people have only a vague notion of freedom. Consequently, they have little of it.

Ideas may be tangible, like a house, or intangible, like freedom. They may also be either true or false. Whether true or false, ideas define our behavior.

Ideals

An ideal is not what is but what should be. When we begin to plan a house, we move from the idea of a house to the ideal house we want to live in. Borsodi quoted Kant: "Ideals, though they cannot claim objective reality, are not therefore to be considered as mere chimeras, but supply reason with an indispensable standard, because it requires the concept of that which is perfect of its kind, in order to estimate and measure by it the degree and number of defects in the imperfect."

So, it is not the idea "that moves men," as Oliver Wendel Homes suggested, as much as it is the ideal.

Ideologies

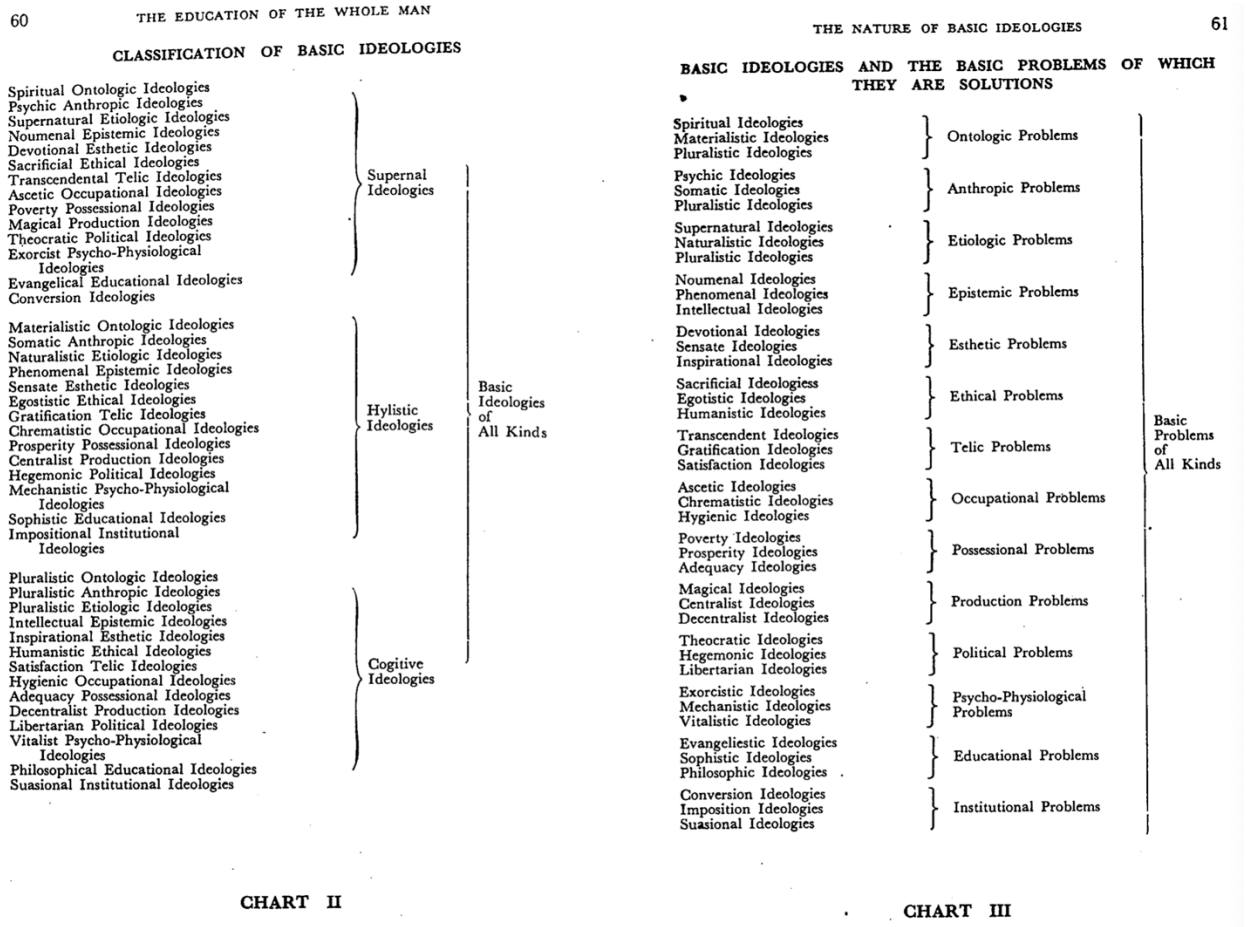
An ideology is "a more or less consistent body of ideas, and often ideals, usually developed around an underlying central idea." We tend to think of ideologies as political programs, but they are much more than mere expressions of political behavior. There are ideologies in politics and religion and other areas by which adherents are identified. Borsodi noted some of the more general ideologies such as Materialism, Theism, Agnosticism, Atheism, Stoicism, Hedonism, Industrialism, Urbanism, etc. There are ideologies in music, the plastic arts and literature. "Modernism" in the arts is such an ideology.

The modern world is defined by ideologies. We find them expressed in Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*, Marx's *Das Kapital*, Hitler's *Mein Kamp*," Mao's *Red Book*, etc. We find formative ideologies in Darwin and Freud. We see their expression in Star Wars and Star Trek. These are what Borsodi suggested as "high voltage" ideologies.

Ideas, ideals and ideologies come with a wide range of emotional "voltage." Ideas, Borsodi wrote, carry relatively little charge. Ideals are highly charged emotionally. But ideologies "are charged emotionally to the nth degree." Ideas stimulate the brain, but ideologies mobilize entire civilizations.

Borsodi considered a keen understanding of ideologies crucial to his work. He devoted a great deal of time over the years to finding, analyzing and classify ideologies. At this point he had between four and five hundred of them. And, I would note, they come together in final form in his encyclopedic *Seventeen Problems of Man and Society* (1968). In *The Education of The Whole Man* he provided two summary charts that listed and classified ideologies and connected them to the basic problems to which they applied.

[59] I would suggest architect Christopher Alexander's pattern language as a good way to describe such formulations.



60 THE EDUCATION OF THE WHOLE MAN

CLASSIFICATION OF BASIC IDEOLOGIES

Spiritual Ontologic Ideologies	Supernal Ideologies	Basic Ideologies of All Kinds
Psychic Anthropic Ideologies		
Supernatural Etiologic Ideologies		
Noumenal Epistemic Ideologies		
Devotional Esthetic Ideologies		
Sacrificial Ethical Ideologies		
Transcendental Telic Ideologies		
Ascetic Occupational Ideologies		
Poverty Possessional Ideologies		
Magical Production Ideologies		
Theocratic Political Ideologies		
Exorcist Psycho-Physiological Ideologies		
Evangelical Educational Ideologies		
Conversion Ideologies		
Materialistic Ontologic Ideologies	Hylistic Ideologies	
Somatic Anthropic Ideologies		
Naturalistic Etiologic Ideologies		
Phenomenal Epistemic Ideologies		
Sensate Esthetic Ideologies		
Egostistic Ethical Ideologies		
Gratification Telic Ideologies		
Chrematistic Occupational Ideologies		
Prosperity Possessional Ideologies		
Centralist Production Ideologies		
Hegemonic Political Ideologies		
Mechanistic Psycho-Physiological Ideologies		
Sophistic Educational Ideologies		
Impositional Institutional Ideologies		
Pluralistic Ontologic Ideologies	Cogitive Ideologies	
Pluralistic Anthropic Ideologies		
Pluralistic Etiologic Ideologies		
Intellectual Epistemic Ideologies		
Inspirational Esthetic Ideologies		
Humanistic Ethical Ideologies		
Satisfaction Telic Ideologies		
Hygienic Occupational Ideologies		
Adequacy Possessional Ideologies		
Decentralist Production Ideologies		
Libertarian Political Ideologies		
Vitalist Psycho-Physiological Ideologies		
Philosophical Educational Ideologies		
Suasional Institutional Ideologies		

CHART II

THE NATURE OF BASIC IDEOLOGIES 61

BASIC IDEOLOGIES AND THE BASIC PROBLEMS OF WHICH THEY ARE SOLUTIONS

Spiritual Ideologies Materialistic Ideologies Pluralistic Ideologies	Ontologic Problems	Basic Problems of All Kinds
Psychic Ideologies Somatic Ideologies Pluralistic Ideologies	Anthropic Problems	
Supernatural Ideologies Naturalistic Ideologies Pluralistic Ideologies	Etiologic Problems	
Noumenal Ideologies Phenomenal Ideologies Intellectual Ideologies	Epistemic Problems	
Devotional Ideologies Sensate Ideologies Inspirational Ideologies	Esthetic Problems	
Sacrificial Ideologiess Egotistic Ideologies Humanistic Ideologies	Ethical Problems	
Transcendent Ideologies Gratification Ideologies Satisfaction Ideologies	Telic Problems	
Ascetic Ideologies Chrematistic Ideologies Hygienic Ideologies	Occupational Problems	
Poverty Ideologies Prosperity Ideologies Adequacy Ideologies	Possessional Problems	
Magical Ideologies Centralist Ideologies Decentralist Ideologies	Production Problems	
Theocratic Ideologies Hegemonic Ideologies Libertarian Ideologies	Political Problems	
Exorcistic Ideologies Mechanistic Ideologies Vitalistic Ideologies	Psycho-Physiological Problems	
Evangeliestic Ideologies Sophistic Ideologies Philosophic Ideologies	Educational Problems	
Conversion Ideologies Imposition Ideologies Suasional Ideologies	Institutional Problems	

CHART III

Societies inculcate ideologies into their members; their cultures. That is true of organizations of all sorts; both sacred and secular. Ideologies are the core of educational activities. Students in colleges and universities, for example, are by and large shaped by the ideology of "higher" education. Borsodi and friends went to great lengths to state their influence on education – and the problems they caused.

Borsodi considered himself a pioneer in the task of classifying ideologies. He found classifying ideologies an enormously difficult undertaking. The problem framework allowed him to do this, as seen in Chart III. As can be seen in Chart II, Borsodi further sorted his list of ideologies into three categories.

Supernal Ideologies are both noetic and axiologic in nature, that is, they are products of both human reason and human feeling. They have five things in common:

1. They depend on supernatural revelation or metaphysical intuition and not phenomenal knowledge of any kind.
2. They assume there is an ultimate noumenal world behind the visible, phenomenal world.
3. Man is a soul and not a body. The soul, not the body, is the ultimate reality.
4. The origin and destiny of the world, including man, comes from the will of some ultimate spiritual or divine entity and subject to that entities' will.

5. Man's purpose in life is to transcend the sensate and intellectual limitations of life on the Earth.

Hylistic Ideologies are about the material world. It is the world of science. The significant ideas they have in common include:

1. Reality is established only through phenomenal knowledge.
2. The actual visible and chaotic phenomenal world is all there is.
3. Man is essentially a body, the mind or spirit if you will, is an epiphenomenon of his body, he has no free-will and that choice is an illusion.
4. There is no reliance on origin and destiny in the world but rather it is simply an inescapable chain of cause and effect.
5. There is only one life: we are born, live and die. All we have is the here and now.

Hylistic ideologies are behind the work of Pavlov and Watson in psychology and today the socio-biologist. They do not admit of a "mind."

Cogitive Ideologies are pluralistic in nature rather than monistic as are the first two categories. Cogitive ideologies assume the possibility of both order and disorder in the nature of the universe, that there may be both spirit and matter, and that man has some degree of free will subject to the forces of nature. In Borsodi's opinion: "primacy must be given neither to the physical nor the metaphysical but to the human mind – to the mind of man – with its unique capacity for reasoning."

The essential assumptions of cogitive ideologies are:

1. Truth is established through reasoning.
2. While there may be an ultimate noumenal and orderly world, our conclusion about it are speculative.
3. Man is a highly complex mix of mind and body and perhaps soul and has a sufficiency of free-will to make choices about how he shall live.
4. The universe operates without the interference of any supreme being but rather through the laws of nature.
5. And finally, that man's purpose in life "must thus be devoted neither to transcendence nor to gratification but rather to the actualization to the utmost of the potentialities of normal human life as comprehended by human reason and demonstrated by logical and scientific processes of study."

Borsodi assigned the following criteria to these five qualities:

1. Epistemic criterion
2. Onologic
3. Anthropic
4. Etiologic
5. Telic

With this basic classification we have Borsodi's system and the rationale for creating it as he did. With *The Education of the Whole Man* we have his first theoretical and philosophical description of his work.

Chapter VI: The Nature of Human Action

Borsodi started this chapter with the idea that educators cannot avoid being social engineers. At root here is that the educator is responsible not only for proper method but cannot avoid the question: "what kind of society to educate for." Indeed, progressive education is about "adjusting" students to the world in which they live. Under our economic system it is about achieving the standard of living of modern industry. Adjustment is sociological, not praxiological. It is not about humanizing the student and equipping him or her to live as a normal (optimal) human being.

To make this change will require a revolution in education. Borsodi stated this explicitly:

> *"This is the contention of this study: that education should be based upon a science of human action, both individual and collective in scope; that adequate analysis of the nature of human action proves conclusively that the preoccupation of social scientist of all kinds – economists, sociologist, political scientists -with the sociological approach, introduces a hopeless bias into education; that it begins by making the educator accept the role of adjuster instead of leader; and ends by conditioning those whom he teaches to accept collective and political solutions for what they are almost gleefully told are social problems, when in reality most of them are problems that can be far better solved family by family, and individual by individual."*

The focus of modern education is on the collective. Borsodi calls not for the abandonment of such studies "but for adequate study of the entity here called the individual human action." It must be emphasized that it is about *individual* actions. "Society" is a hypothesis. We need measurably fact. You can only get those by looking at individual behavior. Lacking that, "social sciences will remain nescience rather than genuine sciences."

Experience manifest itself only in the individual and in some interval of time. What happens in that interval of time can be observed. Borsodi's axiom is "How to live is in reality therefore the problem of how to act." History and biography are the record of human action, not just thought.

Every action is particular. It is what Korzybski called an "event," or object level of experience. It is the experience an individual has when something gets his or her attention. "Social" actions are the result of the interaction between individual human beings during particular intervals of time and at particular places. Borsodi illustrated this:

> *"What I am at this present moment doing is writing. A particular person, Ralph Borsodi, is performing this act; in a particular place, in my home in Melbourne, Florida, U.S.A.; at a particular time, on July 3, 1956."*

And, he adds, this act has a duration. He started at 10:43 a.m. and will continue until he does something else.

At this point he is in India rewriting the draft he spoke of. He was then working on classification of human action. He recalled the work of reducing 8,000 records of human problems into the current fourteen basic aspects of problems. The two charts above represent the end-results of this work over a period of years.

Borsodi further clarified the difference between doing and experiencing. Experience is an awareness of current action. Awareness, in turn, can be passive or active. I take from this that active awareness is itself an action.

Borsodi noted that his classification system was based on value judgements. And he added two more charts; one classifies human action by ethical aspects. The other in terms of occupations.

CLASSIFICATION ETHICALLY OF HUMAN ACTIONS OF ALL KINDS

(From The Ethical Problem)

This chart summarizes the classification of the eight thousand actions upon which this whole study is based, in accordance with their ethical aspects. The classifications in the first column are called Divisions, in the second column Sub-categories, and in the third, Categories.

Prohibited Pseudo-Immoral Individual Actions.	Immoral Individual Human Actions	Human Actions of All Kinds
Prohibited Immoral Individual Actions.		
Proscribed Immoral Actions.		
Mandatory Harmonious Individual Actions.	Moral Individual Human Actions	
Mandatory Individual Disciplinary Actions.		
Prescribed Harmonious Actions.		
Normal Harmonious Individual Actions.	Amoral Individual Human Actions	

CHART IV

OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF HUMAN ACTIONS OF ALL KINDS

(From The Occupational Problem)

This chart summarizes the classification of the eight thousand actions upon which this whole study is based, in accordance with their occupational aspects. The classifications in the first column are called Divisions, in the second column, Sub-Categories, and in the third, Categories.

Independent Work Dependent Work	Work	Occupations of All Kinds
Cathartic Recreations Participations Spectations	Recreations	
Anabolic Recuperations Catabolic Recuperations	Recuperations	

CHART V

In short, this treatment of ethics, allows the introduction of the teaching of values; now rarely found in education.

Borsodi took his classification a step further with the distinction between normal (again, optimal) and abnormal human actions. Borsodi gave more complete definitions for each statement in this chart (VI) in detail. I will address them only briefly. There is a lot of insightful material I will of necessity be leaving out. That perhaps speaks to the problem of generalization; which by definition is the reduction of detail. I reiterate that the serious student must study this book and it is available free online.

Each of these two classifications is divided between individual and gregational (group) actions. Borsodi clarified that these are actually two different kinds of individual actions. In the case of the group, each individual may act to accept, modify or reject the collective enterprise. But there is a third condition: Some acts are made by choice, others by habitual actions. The aware and disciplined individual has control in either case. Even when subconsciously or hormonally driven, we have the choice to restrain our behavior. Yes, some things we

HUMAN ACTIONS OF ALL KINDS

Hereditary Actions Instinctive Actions Tropismic Actions Unconscious Actions	Indirectly Controllable Automatic Individual Actions	Normal Individual Actions	Normal Human Actions	Human Actions of all Kinds
Acquired Actions Initial Actions Habitual Actions Conscious Actions Interactions	Directly Controllable Voluntary Individual Actions			
Poligregational Actions	Compulsory Gregational Actions	Normal Gregational Actions		
Aggregational Actions Epigregational Actions Segregational Actions Congregational Actions	Voluntary Gregational Actions			
Hereditary Actions Instinctive Actions Tropismic Actions Unconscious Actions	Indirectly Controllable Automatic Individual Actions	Abnormal Individual Actions	Abnormal Human Actions	
Acquired Actions Initial Actions Habitual Actions Conscious Actions Interactions	Directly Controllable Voluntary Individual Actions			
Poligregational Actions	Compulsory Gregational Actions	Abnormal Gregational Actions		
Aggregational Actions Epigregational Actions Segregational Actions Congregational Actions	Voluntary Gregational Actions			

must do such as eating, breathing, sleeping but even these can to a certain degree be controlled if circumstances warrant.

Abnormal groups limit voluntary action. They assert authority over the actions of their members. As a social species we are subject to conformity. Society requires a degree of cooperation. We are typically conditioned to proper behavior. Some social scientists don't believe individuals have any ability to act voluntarily at all. Many religions considered humans innately flawed. The abnormal individual actions are restrained by rules. Abnormal conditioning must be controlled or will lead to conflict. The normal individual consciously chooses action. A normal individual will act for the greater good.

Borsodi's praxiological axiom is that a healthy individual is capable of making his or her own decisions. One of the distinguishing features of democratic society and a free economy is that individuals make informed decisions.

One of the dangers of democratic societies is conformity – herd behavior. A hazard of a society of abundance is we too readily expect our needs to be taken care of automatically. Advertising conditions us to impulsive buying. In an increasingly complex society, we depend on experts to solve our problems. In short, we acquiesce to external conditioning.

Borsodi makes a distinction between action and interaction. To him, interaction is still a process of individual actions. The problem framework, particularly as outlined in *The Challenge of Asia* and further in this book, makes these various forms of action and interaction crystal clear. He concludes this chapter by again emphasizing that the proper study of human action is the individual, not society, and that:

> *"The proper basis for equipping ourselves, and for teaching those whom we influence to deal with both their personal problems and the great social, economic and political problems of our times in a genuinely rational and humane manner, should focus all the sciences, all philosophy, all knowledge and wisdom [on] how the individual, individual by individual, should act."*

Chapter VII, Section I: The Nature of Norms of Action

Why is it important to achieve a normal level of life? Human beings have survived millennia of abnormal societies. The difference, wrote Borsodi, is that under those circumstances it was only necessary to live long enough to produce a new generation. It is more about "animal" survival than about being a human being. Few had the time or literacy to speculate on human possibility. Borsodi wrote:

> *"Finally, I am saying that he will never be able to live as man is potentially capable of living – that he will never cultivate the Earth, utilize its natural resources, profit from his cultural inheritance, and spend the years of his life individually and collectively, healthily, affectionately, rationally, conscientiously, and with good taste – until he develops a system of education based upon some ideal as normal living – or, to use the words of Matthew Arnold, upon the idea of "the humanization of man."*

Borsodi then offered six clear distinctions of normal living:

1. We need precise definitions for the terms norms, normal, normal living and norms of living.
2. The method employed is rational and scientific.

3. We need an exact understanding of the term "individual." We are male and female, there are distinctive stages in life, and we evolve during our lives.
4. We need to be clear to distinguish the definition of normal living in terms of its social and individual aspects. We are by nature connected to other individuals through the family.
5. And by extension to the community: what is the relationship of the family to the community around it?
6. We must formulate the whole complex of basic problems. That will require a volume for each problem.

Chapter VII, Section II: The Law of Human Actions

The underlying methodology for the universal problems is something modern social scientists have not even tried to formulate. We must start with the difference between man and animal – the human mind. Only we have the power to determine how we should act and to act as we should. There is a moral context and that story can be found in the tragedies of history – the mistakes we have made. We have not used our minds to maximize our potential. This should be the law of human action.

There are traits called instincts and drives we all inherit – including those that are distinctively human such as consciousness, language, etc. There are also other traits that are acquired or learned – voluntarily or not. These acquired traits can be improved through re-education to form a more normal personality.

Borsodi went into more depth about the instinctual drives:

1. The drive for self-survival. At base this instinct is found in all living organisms. In man it is shaped by doctrines, particularly economic doctrines. Life is more than economics.
2. The instinctual drive for race-survival/self-replication – the sexual instinct. Again, a trait shared by all living organisms. Freud is particularly noted for his focus on the sex drive. We can either submit to the drive as animals do or pursue sublimation – turning sexual energy into creative expression.
3. The instinctual drive for self-expression. Man alone possesses this quality and, in Borsodi's opinion, it takes precedent over the previous two instincts. It is the development of this endowment that makes us human.
4. The instinctual drive for self-annihilation – the necrotic "instinct." If we fail to live like a normal human being, fail to actualize the three drives above, then this drive expresses itself. Even the slightest frustration can result in lethargy or irritability. More serious frustrations and we become neurotic. At the worst the instinct for self-annihilation becomes dominant.

Self-annihilation can take the form of suicide, addictive behavior or violent behavior when directed towards others. Borsodi gives a more complete description below.

In short, in order to achieve a normal life, we need to be taught how to do so: "Only by learning how to deal with both his personal and his social problems can modern man end the frustrations to which his present devotion to progress and its implementation through centralization, condemns him." And this education is in the universal problems.

Chapter VII, Section III: The Definition of "Norm" and "Normal"

"All of the conditions of man," begins Borsodi, "both normal and abnormal, are the consequences of human actions." In short, "norms" are about actions.

A norm is a rule, or "authoritative standard." As such it is not "what is" but "what should be." Borsodi rejects the interpretation of normal as "average." A norm will always be a statement of an ideal –the qualities of an organism at its best. In nature, "normal" is the standard. An animal that becomes abnormal, diseased or disabled, rarely continues to live very long.

A norm may be either descriptive or prescriptive. Description tells us about specific attributes or functions. Prescription may be either prohibitive or obligatory.

The normal individual is: "An individual human being whose physical and mental attributes, and whose actions and patterns of action, fall within the normal range of variation for each such attribute or activity, and who fulfills all the functions of human living during each period of his life, and during his life as a whole is a normal human being."

There are few such normal human beings. The evidence of that is the unfortunate condition of physical and mental health in society. I would note that it was about this time that psychologist Abraham Maslow developed his model of the self-actualized personality. Maslow thought that only about one-half of a percent of Americans achieve that state. Since every human being is potentially "normal," the reason for abnormality, says Borsodi, is mis-education – what we are taught.

Borsodi reiterated that "normal" should not be confused with concepts such as "natural, average, conventional and uniform." It is above all not to be confused with "average." While we are a product of nature, we choose our actions; or not. We are a product of society and culture but again we may choose to rise above these limitations; or not.

"Fulfills all … the functions of an individual" refers to both biological functions and to social and economic functions. "Economically, it means self-support and contributing to the maintenance of a family. Socially, politically, intellectually, ethically, and esthetically, it means a personal contribution to sustain, and to develop further, the culture of the society to which the individual belongs." In short, it is about rising above mediocrity.

Normal living is expressed in satisfaction, not frustration.

Borsodi again stressed that norms change during the nine phases of life. Actions must be appropriate for each of those stages.

Chapter VII, Section IV: Norms of Living: Methods and Criteria

Borsodi wrote that he thought that mankind has "accumulated the knowledge and wisdom needed to distinguish between normal and abnormal behavior." He added: "I further believe that this total accumulation – ancient and modern, Eastern and Western, philosophic and scientific – includes sufficient methodological knowledge and a sufficient number of methodological techniques so that it can be integrated and made a basis for the humanization of humanity." Indeed, human behavior, both optimal and pathological, has occupied the finest minds throughout human history.

Borsodi wrote: "All the major problems of living have been faced over and over again by the great minds of the past, and all the major solutions of the problems have been prescribed, and often tried over and over again, in the history of mankind. At this moment, evaluation and integration are probably more important than additional accumulation of knowledge." The key is integration. The methods of science can be used, "the deductive, the inductive, the statistical, the experimental and the comparative," to help achieve this integration."

There was, at that time, a movement to achieve greater integration of human knowledge. In addition to general systems theory, and largely coincidental with it, came the early developers in computer science and cybernetics. The idea that became the hyperlink, for example, was first proposed for a mechanical device designed by Vannevar Bush in 1945 he called "Memex," – short for "Memory *Ex*tender." Bush was a leader in early computer science. I've written about this movement in the last chapter of my book about Alfred Korzybski(link)[60].

While admitting that his system may not be the best or final, Borsodi proposed four methods for pursuing integration:

1. Praxiologic Criterion: Criterion comes from a Greek root meaning a method of judgement. He distinguishes "criterion" from the meaning of method which he defined as an orderly procedure or process for arriving at a conclusion. He wrote: "We are seeking methods which will provide us with means for judging the validity of normal of living."

   Again, this takes us into the range of value judgements; into the evaluation of human actions. Borsodi added: "The classifications, from the standpoint of ethics, which I made of the eight thousand cases of human action finally resulted in the emergence of three categories, which I call (1) moral actions, (2) amoral actions, and (3) immoral actions" as represented in Chart I above.

2. The Psycho-Physiologic Criterion: There are four assumptions about psycho-physiologic criterion, and they need to be taken together, not separately – as a whole. As such they dramatically reinforce each other. These are, again, self-preservation, race-continuation (propagation), self-expression and the necrotic drive. Borsodi goes into a more detailed description of each in this section. The first two are more or less self-explanatory. Borsodi provides some important thoughts about the latter two and I will try to summarize these.

   Self-Expression: This is something only humans can do and it "leads him to devote himself to arts and crafts and literary activities; to science and inventions and discoveries of all sorts; to both altruistic and egotistic form of endeavor; the building of social and political institutions which maintain a balance between such altruistic and egotistic urges; to religious worship and the quest of immortality, of paradise, of salvation, of nirvana and moksha; and to the philosophy and concern about the purposes to which life should be devoted."

[60] Alfred Korzybski: Time Binder: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1DP5dqXU6oU2khoXsvwWq-MxCQj9BIcr4/edit.

It is in the field of self-expression that we rise above the instinct. It is here that we begin to express our humanity. Only human beings can act self-consciously.

The Necrotic Instinct: Borsodi summarizes it as "Every destructive and aggressive impulse in man, from alcoholism to war, whether directed toward himself or outward toward others, is an expression of the necrotic instinct." All the great warlords, and those who followed them into war, "were individuals responding to the necrotic instinct." He includes other forms of withdrawal from life, such as mystical traditions – turning away from the world – which can be a response to the necrotic instinct. It is a response to being overwhelmed by misfortune.

What then is the alternative? Borsodi wrote: "All actions and activities which do not and cannot satisfy man's basic instinctual drives harmoniously, are abnormal; only those acts and patterns of action which involve no frustration of the basic survival, sexual and expressic instincts are normal." These must be learned.

3. The Pragmatic Criterion: Pragmatic criterion are norms of living; of action. "We may sum up pragmatic criterion," wrote Borsodi, "by saying that it is a method for distinguishing between activities which are normal and those which are not, by the test of the way in which they work." To determine what is normal, as in our diet, we draw from the accumulated knowledge of humankind; historical, anthropological and geographic research, and scientific experimentation. Our choices are driven by experience; by choosing those things that work best for us.
4. Homometric Criterion: This is mathematical and statistical methods applied to the problems of man. An example is the ideal weight by height. Both are concrete numbers. As a practicing economist and accountant, Borsodi was keen on numbers and mathematical reasoning. He was also expert in classification.

   Borsodi warned again of specialization and particularly the abstractions found in the social science for which there is a lack of objective facts. He had some advice about how to correct the problem of social research – a method he used in developing the problems of living framework. In essence, it is the scientific method. He concluded this chapter with this further admonition:

> *"It is perfectly obvious that the use of this method requires drawing upon knowledge from every field of art and science, including the humanities, and every religion, ideology and school of philosophy, either for the purpose of furnishing cases, of verifying the principles developed, or of passing judgement upon the solutions which different religions, different philosophies and different ideology now offer with regard to the problem under consideration.*

Borsodi demonstrated an extraordinary erudition in this discourse. He drew from East and West, ancient and contemporary, sources. He made connections with his Indian audience.

Chapter VIII: The Nature of Classification: A Note on Methodology.

An individual human action can be described. From that description you get:

1. The name or identity of the particular person who performed the act being described.
2. The particular place where it was performed.
3. The particular day, month and year it was performed.
4. The interval of time during which it was performed.
5. The particular process for which it was performed.
6. The sequence of activities performed during the time-interval of the whole action.
7. The specific consequence which followed from it so far as society and the individuals involved in it were concerned.

Borsodi reiterated that he accumulated nearly 8,000 such observation since he began this study. From the beginning he included these criteria for each observation.

The next problem is classifying these actions by common and distinctive characteristics. As the classes of basic problems were defined, so too were the ideas, ideals and ideologies related to them. This classification is mandatory: "Without classification, we have nothing but impulse, tradition, and dogma to fall back upon." Without an adequate classification, we have little prospect of integrating what we know.

The social sciences are lacking in this method. Borsodi said he could speak with authority about economics and with almost as much authority about sociology and political science. The social sciences need their own taxonomy, much as found in biology, and will remain pseudo-sciences until this is achieve.[61] Law, medicine, theory and pedagogy have not made much progress either.

Borsodi wrote that the beginning of the science of classification goes back to Peter Mark Roget (1779 – 1869) who developed his famous classification of English words and phrases. Borsodi acknowledged it as a "profoundly philosophic work." Borsodi considered reducing Roget's system into a mere dictionary of synonyms and antonyms degraded it. Roget, he wrote, new better. Roget himself wrote that the difference between his system and the dictionary is that the dictionary starts with a word and provides a meaning. His thesaurus starts with a meaning and seeks to find the words "by which the idea may be most fitly and aptly expressed. For this purpose, the words and phrases of the language are here classed, not according to their sound or their orthography, but strictly according to their signification." Roget acknowledged his debt to natural history with the statement "the filiation of words presents a network analogous to the natural filiation of plants and animals." Borsodi also noted the importance of the biologist Linnaeus (1707 – 1778) and his seminal classification system.

Borsodi borrowed these systems for his classification of human actions. Particularly, he noted Roget's pattern of six final categories –abstract relations, space, matter, intellect, volition and affections – 24 classifications in the second level, about 1,000 in the third level which brought him, in his fourth level, to "to the particular words and phrases he was classifying, to the level of what I think of as 'cases'." Borsodi's system had not four but

[61] It should be noted that biology, the study of living organisms and not matter, is the leading science in classification. And it should be understood that general systems theory and systems ecology evolved out of biology.

fourteen levels of cases (the level of particulars) which then group into only four or five of the highest levels in his ladder of classification.

Every human action is a whole and integrated process. The "action" itself is only part of the totality of the process. It is both mental and physical in character. The act of work, for example is not only an economic activity but also has "individual and social, ethical and esthetic, mental and physical aspects." Every act does in fact have economic aspects. All actions have in common the process of living. We are typically engaged in more than one process at a time. When we go to work after a meal, our bodies are digesting. We are breathing, our heart Is beating, we may be sitting or standing or moving about, we sometimes speak and sometimes think. They all overlap.

What is being sought is a normative approach, an approach to normal, that is optimal, living; living as a human being should without arbitrary restraints. A science of action informs education. It informs the moralist in that it will provide a rational basis for distinguishing between what is right and wrong; to the political, social and economic reformer a rational basis for their reform; to the legislator a rational basis for evaluation existing statues and enacting new ones; etc.

Chapter IX: A Programme for the Crisis of Our Times

Programme, and programming and planning are merely different words which refer to the same thing. The humanization of humanity requires planning. Borsodi clarified this in these terms:

> *"It is the study of planning, individual by individual, by the thoughtful, concerned, courageous and dedicated minority of mankind; of planning by this elite minority not of the economic and social and political life of their nation as wholes, but of planning for a better life and a better world by what individual men and women as members of their families, members of their communities, and finally as members of the whole of humanity can do."*

Again, it is a distinctively individual and not collective act of planning. It requires each such individual, each member of this creative minority, to do the work required. It requires a clear understanding of the human condition and the process of resolving the crisis of our times.

Borsodi repeated that he addressed this study to the educators of mankind. He noted that the word "scholar" in Chinese texts and the yogi described in the Bhagavad Gita, karma yogi especially, "are the kind of men and women he has in mind." I think Borsodi's "Pan-Humanist Manifesto," written just after he arrived in India, is a preamble to this assertion.

Yes, such people are elites, they are, according to the Chinese classics, "superior" individuals. They are deeply thoughtful men and women regardless of their vocation. Without them (as Toynbee demonstrated) societies, civilizations, fail.

It cannot be overemphasized that this work requires planning. This is an age of planning. But the bureaucratic planners are failing to either maintain order or make needed changes. The creative minority must formulate long term plans and provide the leadership needed to achieve them – leadership not by direction but by example and through education.

Again, planning begins with the individual, not the conglomerate. It has to be done "by individuals, one by one, family by family, village by village, and these individuals need to be taught how to plan both personally and socially by humanized educators, instead of being taught to leave all planning to the professional graduates of our schools of planning."

Planners today have lost sight of the end and focused on the means. The great leaders in history, such as Moses, Solon, Plato, Confucius and Manu, for example, were planners. Gandhi and King could be added to this list.

Planning is grassroots. The plan must be founded on the norms of living of individuals, families and communities.

Borsodi summarized:

> *"The three most important occupations in my considered view are neither governing nor engineering, as most men believe today, nor business and money-making, as most men believed yesterday. The three most important occupations are educating, homemaking and farming; the first because it is the educators of mankind who either humanize or fail to humanize both man and society; the second, because it creates the environment in which the young are either rightly or wrongly prepared for living like normal human beings; and the third because it makes most directly for collaboration with Mother Nature, for man's co-operation with the living soil, the living plants and the living animals of the Earth."*

Borsodi further stressed that:

> *"Planning in the broad sense in which it is dealt with in this study, falls into two areas; planning the manner in which to deal with the personal problems with which life will confront us, in the various 'ages' through which we still have to pass; and planning for the public, for the social, economic and political problems with which we have to deal as a citizen and as a member of the whole human race. Planning for man: planning for society."*

Again, planning is individual by individual. And where it starts is with the educational system, not the state nor the economy. Borsodi proposed that this process will be addressed "at length in Volume XIV, which deals with the education mainly of the individual; the second part we shall consider in Volume XV which deals mainly with the re-education of the culture."

Sixteen Volumes:

This book does not list the sixteen volumes Borsodi had in mind, but they were listed in a 1960 publication entitled "Ralph Borsodi in India," by Shyam Sundar Chawla, sub-editor of the Ambala Tribune; one of Borsodi's leading supporters in India. That document can be found at this link[62]. It is the story about how his Indian friends enthusiastically rallied to support him.

In November 1959, following the dismissal of Patel and other leaders of their movement from the university, Borsodi's friends created the International Institute of Social Sciences to sponsor his work. The purpose of the Institute was "to promote the development of neglected normative sciences dealing with human behavior." Borsodi and Mildred Loomis were listed as members of the Organization Committee; the others were Indian. Membership was $50 USD (or equivalent); which entitled each member to a full set

[62] Ralph Borsodi in India: https://hgarchives.files.wordpress.com/2017/10/chawla-borsodi-in-india-1960.pdf

of the sixteen volumes proposed. There was also a request for donations with a number of levels in ranges to Patrons who contribute not less than$10,000 USD or equivalent.

There are three parts to "Ralph Borsodi in India." The first is a short report on Borsodi's tenure in India. The second part was titled "What Borsodi Means to an Indian." It outlined the major topics of the as yet not published manuscript of what became *The Education of the Whole Man*.

The third part was a pamphlet Borsodi wrote for a seminar held in Simla from May 20 to 27, 1960, "The Fourteen Basic Problems of Man and of Society." That, I believe, was the intended title for the book at that time. This pamphlet gives a detailed outline for all sixteen volumes. In brief, the outline of these titles of these volumes were:

The Fourteen Problems of Man and of Society

Vol. I. The Humanization of Humanity: An Introduction to the Study of the Fourteen Basic Problems of Man and of Society

Man's Three Basic Noetic Riddles: The problem of the cosmic spectacle, of the spectator of the spectacle, and of the cosmic process. An introduction to the study of phenomenology and noumenology:

Vol. II. The Riddle of the Universe: A Study of the Ontologic Problem: A Study of the Ontologic Problem.
Vol. III. The Riddle of Human Nature: A study of the Anthropic Problem.
Vol. IV. The Riddle of Historiography: A Study of the Etiologic Problem

Man's Four Basic Problems in Values: An Introduction to Praxiology:

Vol. V. Truth and Error. A Study of the Epistemic Problem
Vol. VI. Beauty and Ugliness: A Study of the Esthetic Problem
Vol. VII. Good and Evil: A Study of the Ethical Problem
Vol. VIII. Ends and Means: A Study of the Telic Problem

Man's Seven Basic Problems of Individual and Social Implementation: An Introduction to Praxiology

Vol. IX. Labour and Leisure: A Study of the Occupational Problem
Vol. X. Property and Trusterty: A Study of the Possessional Problem
Vol. XI. Enterprise and Efficiency: A Study of the Production Problem
Vol. XII. Harmony and Violence: A Study of the Political Problem
Vol. XIII. Mental and Physical Health: A Study of the Psycho-Physiological Problem
Vol. XIV. Education of the Individual and Education of the Culture: A Study of the Educational Problem.

Vol. XV. Reform and Conservation: A Study of the Institutional Problem

Appendix, Index, and Bibliography

Vol. XVI. This volume is an index and bibliography to all the volumes. There are separate indexes and bibliographies in each volume.

Charts: There are over two hundred charts based upon the classification of the individual human actions the actions of gregations, and the other concepts which are the basis of this study.

In a more extended outline, Borsodi listed the chapters of each of these volumes.

It is clear that with this outline and the formation of the Institute, that Borsodi intended to continue work in India. However, in 1960 he was hospitalized, and his failing health resulted in his return to the United States. The continued support of his Indian friends is demonstrated in the fact that *The Education of the Whole Man* was published in India in 1963. After he recovered in Exeter, Borsodi begin work on what became The *Seventeen Problems of Man and Society* which was a more extensive definition of each problem (see "Seventeen Problems" chapter). This book was also published in India. And I believe it might serve as the sixteenth volume.

In his archives at the University of New Hampshire, there is a considerable body of notes and typescript related to the completion of the sixteen volumes. *The Education of the Whole Man* is designated as the text for Vol. XIV, Education of the Individual and Education of the Culture. Also, in that archive is a large draft of Borsodi's lost manuscript Education and Illth. I suspect that volume would have addressed at least part of the Praxiological problems. I have also found a couple of drafts of extended treatment of several of the intended volumes.

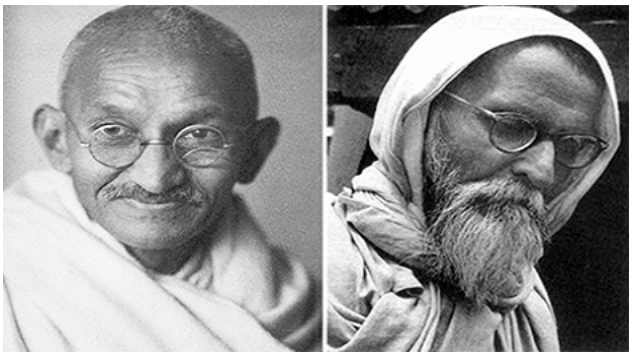
Chapter 11

The Education of the Whole Man Book II

The second section of *The Education of the Whole Man* is a book into itself. In the first section Borsodi provided his conceptual foundation for his universal problem framework and how it should be taught to university students. The second section, some 250 pages in its own right, addresses thirty topics. In these chapters, which can be described as essays, Borsodi clarifies the basic principles and overall philosophy of Right Education. In this chapter I will present a summary of each of these chapters in order to provide the key points. Those so interested can read all or parts of this book which can be found online.

Chapter 1: The Problem of Education

There was a general uneasiness about higher education around the world both before and following World War II. Colleges and universities had become in essence vocational schools preparing students for success in life. Professors were specialists who knew a lot about a very small part of life. Students were also trained as specialists. They were not prepared for either citizenship or a balanced life. In 1959, Vinoba Bhave, "the spiritual successor of Mahatma Gandhi," sharply criticism Indian education which he called "absolutely wrong" and asked for the educational institutions to be shut down for six months to develop a system to meet the needs of the country. I believe that was no small part of Borsodi's mission in India.



Borsodi noted that in 1944, Robert M. Hutchins, then Chancellor of the University of Chicago made an equally strong statement in a speech to the faculty. Hutchins, who Borsodi called a friend, had published his highly critical *The Higher Learning in America* several years before. He called for a reversal of "the whole scale of values by which our society lives."

The problem of education, Borsodi understood, is complex. He characteristically set out to clarify the problem. It starts with the fact that human beings are the only animal that can be educated. Rather than fixed and inflexible as are the instincts of animals, humans have plastic instincts. We are thus the product of what we learn; for better or worse. Consequently, education is our most fundamental problem.

The record of history is not a pretty story. When animals strive for the basic necessities of life, some may kill for food or territorial control. "Man," wrote Borsodi, "kills … for glory, for religion, for power, for wealth, for patriotism, for ideology." The more we

"progress," the more bitter and lethal the conflict. "The gospel of Progress, the belief in Materialism, the devotion to Hedonism, the cult of Nationalism, the doctrine of Centralization – these are some of the ideological germs with which modern man has been infected by those who teach and lead him," he wrote.

Such is not the characteristics of a normal human being. So how do we make education work? Borsodi divided the problem of education into two parts, each complex in its own right: The problem of function and the problem of organization.

The first part is mostly dedicated to defining the functions of education. It includes the definition of mis-education, right education and re-education. The second part, organization, consists first of the three-fold curriculum of physical education, intellectual education and emotional education. It also includes consideration of the roles of the school, the home and the function. The school is not the only mans of education. Also, we must take the problem as a whole and embrace other ways of learning and teaching. Finally, is the question of teaching methods: logical teaching methods, illogical teaching methods and alogical teaching methods. He develops these ideas below.

Chapter II: The Nature of Education

The plasticity of our nature is a fact of biology. Our personalities begin to form very early in our lives. Schooling is but a part of the process. Our education is more spontaneous than self-consciously guided. It is informal and unplanned. The outcome is one of chance. It is not transformative.

Our educational system, whether a part of a school or not, was invented. It is planned, organized, systematized and influential – for better or worse. Organized education is however mandatory for purposeful development of human behavior. Borsodi wrote: "In shaping each individual life, in shaping the totality of behavior in every society, and in effect shaping the destiny of mankind, it is these acquired characteristics which determine both the physical and the psychological behavior of man." In formal education the teacher does, and should, play the leading part.

Chapter III: The Nature of Education's Function

Education has been used for many purposes. It teaches basic skills. In enculturates. It provides vocational training. It teaches them the nature of God and the practice of religion. It shapes the citizen. The way education is organized often depends on its function.

For Borsodi "the nature of the educational problem indicates this function to be the humanization of mankind." Form again follows function. It is about the education of the whole man: "man is normally a whole, and that his education must therefore be whole and not partial." We need a better understanding of how that function is achieved. This clearly cannot be done by existing practices.

Further, Borsodi stated that the needs of each individual vary, that education provides for both leaders and followers – and while both must be educated to be humanized, leaders and followers have different needs. Yes, this suggest an "elite." He wrote: "the humanization of a determining minority of thoughtful, concerned, courageous

and dedicated men and women; and the humanization of the masses who are less educable because they are less thoughtful, by such a properly educated elite." If the educational problem is to be solved, we must clearly understand this dual process. The humanized elite should be morally, esthetically and intellectually qualified for leadership.

Humanization is the process by which people are taught to live and act like normal human beings. The term "normal" must (and will be) clearly defined. To start with, the practice of enculturation normally found in schools and colleges is not humanization. Enculturation provides basic skills but essentially it is indoctrination. It is shaped by parochial ideologies. Enculturation makes distinction by race, nationality, religious dogma, etc. Humanization "aims not at adjusting the individual to his own particular nationality but adjusting him to the problems involved in living as a member of the whole human race." It is not only intellectual education but emotional education as well.

Man is not born "human." It is a long road from the infant at its mother's breast to a mature man or woman. Borsodi will again go into the stages of life later in this book. How well this process is guided determines our humanity.

Chapter IV: The Organization of Education

Two terms, function and organization, need further definition. They will be recurring themes.

Borsodi further defined purpose: "Every activity and every undertaking, every project and every enterprise, can be analyzed in terms of its purposes and of the methods used in trying to realize them." And purpose "in the sense in which it is here used is *that condition which an individual set before himself, or a group of individuals set before themselves, to be realized as a result of the execution of a project or the operation of an enterprise*."

Purposes may be functional or non-function. Functional purposes achieve the end result sought in the statement of purpose. If the function is the humanization of humanity, "it follows that the proper purpose to which an educational system should devote itself is to prepare those who are taught in it to live like normal human beings; to teach them to deal with both their personal and their social problems like rational and humane beings." To the extent that schools fail to fulfill this objective, they are non-functional. A functional education, further, addresses the whole person. "Failure to educate wholly, is failure to educate properly." To be fully functional, every part of the school's program must contribute to this end.

We must, therefore pay attention to the methods used. Borsodi defined methods: "like all purposes, may be divided into two categories, organized and unorganized; into processes which reflect prior thought and prior planning, and so can be said to be organized; and into activities which are impulsive, thoughtless, disorderly, planless, and so unorganized."

Organization requires detailed planning. "Organization is a cause of which efficiency in the fulfillment of purpose is the effect." We organize to ensure the intended purpose is realized. That must be achieve with efficiency – a minimum of wastefulness.

What we call administration in schools can hardly be defined as organization. With administration the focus of the school is the head office, not the teachers and students. It is how the school is run; not what it produces (as long as students pass the mandated standardized exams).

Another term for lack of organization is Institutionalism. One feature of Institutionalism is that "the student body exist for the benefit of the institution, and not the institution for the benefit of the student body." In short, it is not functional. And yet a great deal of money goes into administration, centralization and standardization. It is a factory system.

Chapter V: The Organization of the Curriculum

What is the task of education? Borsodi wrote:

> *"The first and most important task of education, I hope I have made clear, is not enculturation; it is not the task of adjusting and preparing the young for life in the culture in which they happen to be born; it is not instructing them today in techniques and equipping them with knowledge which will enable them to "earn a living" in the industrialized civilization which has spread from England all over the world. _*
>
> *"The first and the most important task of education, is to humanize humanity – to 'educate' the population."*

The curriculum for the education of the whole person consists of two major components: Physical Education and Mental Education – a healthy mind and a healthy body. Mental Education is further divided into two parts: Intellectual Education and Emotional Education. Borsodi briefly outlined these topics before going into further detail in the following two chapters, which I have summarized as follows.

The curriculum for physical education includes topics such as: Gymnastics, sports (teams), Athletics (individual), posture, nutrition, recreation, rest and sexual education. Physical education must also include useful and productive work, for example arts and crafts.

Mental education cultivates the intellectual powers and includes: Instruction, Cultivation and Humanization.

Emotional Education is new ground in curriculum building. It addresses the things we feel and includes:

a. Perceptual education: We are more than mere intellect: "the validity with which it plays its part is wholly dependent upon the validity of man's perception. These perceptions can and must be educated if the whole man is to be made a genuinely rational, rather than a merely rationalizing, animal."
b. Introspection education: However, the intellect is about more than perception (sensation) alone. There are concepts that cannot be traced to the five sense and these are susceptible to cultivation.
c. Axiological education: The cultivation of values.
d. Volitational education: "The fact is that all human action above the level of unthinking impulse and unthinking habit involves the making of choices, and

> when choices are acted upon contrary to habit and contrary to impulse, what is exercised is the faculty traditionally called the will.

These topics are not courses to be taught but practices to be embodied in the students activities.

Emotional education is not so much what the teacher says, but the way they say things; in the teachers bearing, his relationship is with them, how he disciplines them, what he demands of them. Tradition rites and religions have developed along these lines: "Everything which takes place in a school, from the lowest to the highest level, must be in effect ritualized for the purpose of the right kind of emotional education."

Chapter VI: Physical Education

Physical education is not merely exercise, not only calisthenics and gymnastics and competitive sports. It is also about posture, how to walk, sit down and rise, stand; how to hold one's head when speaking. It includes yoga.

Physical education includes proper nutrition – about eating whole foods. It includes sex education, which must be normative as well as descriptive.

Chapter VII: Intellectual Education: Instruction Versus Cultivation.

The idea of the education of the whole mind is ignored today. Borsodi preferred the term cultivation to "education" or "instruction." He distinguishes between cultivation, or humanization, and instruction. In schools today instruction has become a science. Emphasis is on the method rather than the content of learning. It is utilitarian: "The student is taught to read and write not because this opens the door to knowledge and wisdom, to the enjoyment and the riches to be found in books, but because reading and writing are essential if he is to earn a living."

Instruction is primarily intellectual – it is about facts and figures. It is specialized. Specialization may have its role, but it does not address the whole person. It is designed to serve the factory, the assembly line.

Cultivation is in a large sense going beyond the basics. The basics must be provided to all, but education must provide for those who wish to rise to a higher level of understand and ability. Borsodi rejected the leveling of educational egalitarianism.

Borsodi found no essential difference between cultivation and what was once called liberal education. He wrote: "From my standpoint, when American education began to abandon liberal education for scientific education, what was in fact being abandoned was the cultivation of the highly educable minority for the fulfillment of the role which they ought to play in any genuinely humanized society." Citing the Carnegie report on education issued in 1956, Borsodi added that: "A liberal education … should seek to instill in man knowledge of himself, of others, of mankind's achievements and heritage; it should promote in him the capacity for clear and rational thought, and encourage in him a sense of curiosity, criticism, judgement, and tolerance." Liberal education was disappearing from the curriculum. Borsodi again referenced Hutchins, who had called for a revival of liberal education twenty years earlier.

Borsodi was not uncritical of liberal education. He believed it "produced appreciative, rather than creative, men." It lacked music and the arts. He added that a liberal learning should produce at least a minority "which is able to write in the language of the past 'clearly, forcibly, and elegantly,' at least the kind of letters and journal which most educated men wrote before the Industrial Revolution." It must also "produce a minority of amateurs with a mastery of many arts, including many individuals who have a professional mastery of particular ones." He used Leonardo da Vince and Thomas Jefferson as examples.

Philosophy is another topic of cultivation needed to produce whole men. But it is not standard philosophy. It must first of all "become an integration of all knowledge and wisdom, an essential prerequisite for rational and humane resolution of the problems with which everyman is confronted by life. It must not only make him familiar with the history of philosophers and their philosophies, it must equip every student with a philosophy by which he will live."

The study of philosophy must evoke the emotions – it is not only the study of values, "it must make him feel them." Borsodi added: "It must cultivate a love of truth and hatred of error, a love of beauty and hatred of ugliness, a love of goodness and hatred of evil, a love of devotion to the humane life, and a hatred of purposes which are bestial in nature."

> *"This part of the curriculum for intellectual education must include sensitizing his epistemic, telic, esthetic, and ethical potentialities; it must include equipping him with criterions for the evaluation of these values; it must include the cultivation of a conscience which makes him react to all his experiences in life as a thoughtful, considerate, courageous and dedicated human being.*

The cultivation of ethics is required: "The wholly educated man must be a moral and not amoral person." Borsodi, as have others, noted that many highly educated people are amoral and some "decidedly unwholesome persons."

The study of the basic problems of living is about the integration of knowledge and wisdom. That means not only the acquisition of knowledge but "an adequate philosophy by which to guide his own life." Subject-centered education completely ignores the integration of knowledge necessary to produce a whole person. There are too many "subjects" to make integration possible. Integration can be achieved through the universal problems framework. It provides a method for a critical, objective and logical examination of beliefs, values and activities related to the problem. It is a process of self-examination: what is my problem and how do I solve it. And it is a realization that these problems are shared by humankind and that a great deal of understanding has been accumulated about them over time.

The integration of human knowledge is not just another subject listed in college catalogs. "It has an entirely different purpose to fulfill." The distinctive nature of this method must be understood and set apart. It must underlie the planning of curriculum at every level. And it must provide principles of action: "To provide principles, the course must be normative and not merely descriptive; it must aim not at the cultivation of philosophic scholarship and erudition; it must aim at resolving the problems with which living confronts every human being, and with imbuing the student with the determination to live in accordance with the principles for which this calls."

The philosophical attitude sought is a philosophy by which to live. If there is a priority in teaching the problems of living, Borsodi suggested starting with the educational and occupational problems. The educational problem makes the student aware of the nature of right education and the importance of adopting a philosophy by which to live and how to study the problems to help him or her form such a philosophy. But ultimately, particularly in adult education, all fourteen must be studied.

Borsodi related that the first course on the problems of living was given at the Graduate School of Theology at Oberlin University in 1940. He stated that all of his courses have been with adult and graduate groups. Undergraduate teaching in the major problems, Borsodi cautioned, requires experimentation. For the college level student, Borsodi suggested that when they start "the student should be given a kind of philosophic chart and philosophic compass with which to guide himself in his studies; and … in his last year of college work, he should make an intensive study of both the personal and social problems which will confront him after he graduates and comes with life in society at large."

That introduction, Borsodi clarified, should be one or two weeks "devoted to a sort of introduction to real scholarship and higher education." The student would be introduced to the basic problems at that time. The suggested chart, a friend of Borsodi's at Ohio State University said, would consist of "'a series of fourteen boxes in which to file anything and everything he learns for the rest of his life.'"

The last year of college would involve "an introduction to wisdom;" more time to study the basic problems and the wisdom of mankind "embodied in its arts and sciences, religions and philosophies; it should persuade him to try to deal wisely, and not merely impulsively or conventionally, with the problems which will confront him outside the ivory-tower world of the college classroom and college campus."

I think Borsodi is bowing to the realities of the stages of life in regard to the undergraduate. It is a matter of maturity. They are (then and now), due to a lack of life experience, less capable of making clear moral evaluations.

As a final note to this chapter, Borsodi reaffirmed that "intellectual cultivation and emotional education become virtually indistinguishable."

Chapter VIII: General Education

Borsodi opened this chapter with a quote from K. M. Munshi who had been an Indian Independence activist, served in the new Indian government as, among other things, Member of Parliament and Minister for Agriculture and Food, an educator and prolific writer:

> *"In India we have turned the University graduate into a waste-paper basket of odd bits of information …. Education in these days is not the 'leading forth' of the inmost personality of man, but the imposition of cast-iron alien thoughts upon him. … We are walking frauds. We have intellect divorced from will, belief in ideals which are not beliefs in life … modern man does not feel humiliated by the fact that his mind is divorced from speech, his speech from action."*

To the question of what has most changed our way of life over the last century, Borsodi answer that it is modern science. He is not charitable about that: "Modern science dethroned religion and destroyed tradition. It secularized government; … obliterated the

distinction between nobility and commonality. It destroyed cottage and custom production and made the factory system supreme; it provided mankind with its present all-embracing machine technology. … Above all, so far as molding and shaping the generation to which we belong is concerned, it substituted the study of science for that of the liberal arts. … Specialization has replaced humanization."

Science has turned education into vocational training. It has largely erased morals and ethics from our vocabular. And yet we have too little understanding of science to use it to more effectively solve our problems. The scientific method needs to be applied more widely. Of sciences such as axiology and praxiology, social scientists know nothing.

It is not technology, wrote Borsodi, but our behavior. "The sickness form which modern man is suffering, is neither economic nor political; it is philosophical." We need not more scientific knowledge but more wisdom. Scientific knowledge must be seen as a means and not an end.

Borsodi quoted Leo Tolstoy at length concerning his attitude toward sciences. In essence, Tolstoy found the advancement of science in inverse proportion to its application to the questions of life. Even in physiology, psychology, biology and sociology "you come across an appalling scantiness of ideas, the greatest obscurity and unjustified pretense at solving irrelevant questions." Most scientific enquiry, Tolstoy, opined, ignores the questions of life.

Sorokin, Borsodi added, considered that the more economists, self-proclaimed scientists, tampered with economics, the worst things have become. He found that equally true in his own subject of sociology.

There was a lot of educational reform in Borsodi's time before World War II. After the war there was a "veritable downpour of books and articles dealing with education." His own response came with *Education and Living* in which he went to considerable pains to describe mis-education. He reiterated a number of his criticism of modern education in this chapter.

Chapter IX: Integrated Education

The fragmentation of specialization creates a world of chaos. It provides us no sense of direction. While it provides a lot of knowledge about how things work it does not tell us what we need to do or why. Borsodi wrote: "… to contribute to a better way of living and to the development of a better social order, integration of all this knowledge is essential."

Pantology, the scientific classification of all knowledge, had produced only one contribution to modern life, the Dewey decimal system for the classification of books.

Borsodi cited Henry Thomas Buckle: "'no science is really scientific in its own center, but only at its periphery where it impinges upon other sciences.'" The implication is, as Einstein sought and quantum mechanics demonstrated, was a "unified field" of interacting components; a systems view.

The flood of new knowledge is overwhelming. Borsodi noted that there were seven large sub-divisions of biology with 50,000 original contributions being made annually (1948?). In 1948 MIT offered 1,008 courses for the training of engineers. There were 45

courses in chemistry alone. [1970s, I found 28 separate schools of sociology – all in competition for scarce resources and for students].

This represents a terrific volume of undigested knowledge.

But there is far more knowledge than science and that is what has been accumulated by the high civilizations of the world, "mankind's accumulation of belles lettres, poetry, biography, fiction and in fact arts of all kinds. Philosophy and theory. History, sociology, political science, psychology, physiology. This list is long.

Chapter X: The Basic Problems of Man and of Society

The solution of a basic problem requires not the consulting of a subject but many subjects. It draws on the knowledge accumulated about solving the problems of living from the time of the first conscious human beings. These problems have been part of the entire human experience. Chart II summarizes them according to his scheme of classification. This was Chart I in the first section of *The Education of the Whole Man*.

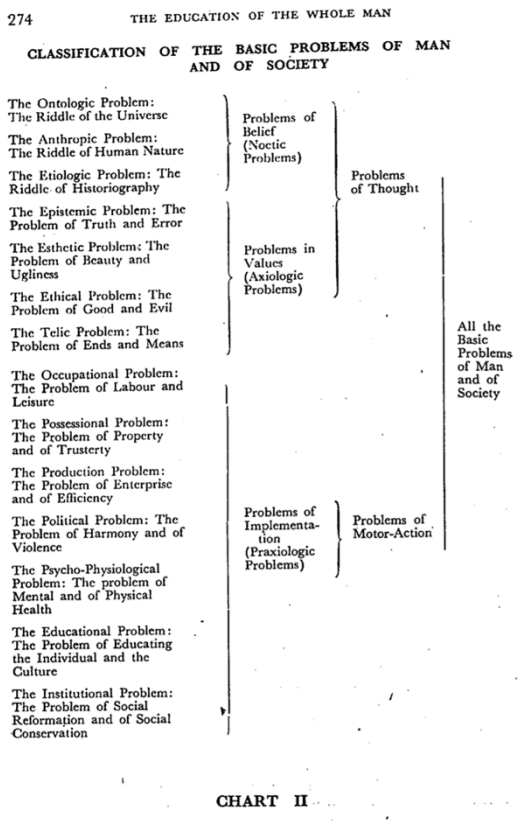


CHART II

Chapter XI: Basic Ideologies and Basic Problems

The solution to the problems is found "in the ideas, ideals, and ideologies it has developed. These were presented in Section I, where they were discussed "fully."

Chapter XII: Emotional Education: The Cultivation of the Conscience

In this chapter, Borsodi considerably elaborated his belief in the emotional aspect of education. The lack of emotional education in the American school system, he wrote, is the source of a range of social pathology, "the rising tide of dependence, delinquency, degeneracy and decadence" as he reported in *Education and Living*. That was also true in Europe and included communist Russia. In India it was "Mildly called 'student indiscipline.'" Borsodi attribute this situation to three factors: "[Education's] acceptance of the role of adjusting the student to an industrialized society which is essentially destructive of emotion health; its failure to organize the curriculum to provide for right emotional education; and its failure to include in the educational system as a whole an adequate system of adult education."

The first of these situations he discussed at length in his *This Ugly Civilization*, published in 1929. In this chapter he said he would discuss the failure of the organization of the curriculum.

Emotional action is the result of felt and conscious responses to emotion-provoking stimulus. In short, such experiences, all experiences, flow through the nervous system and into the base of the brain[63]. We experience pain or pleasure. In case of perceived threat, we respond by flight or fight. In short, the emotional reaction awakens instinctual response.

Consciousness can play a guiding role in our response; or not. It is a question of whether we attempt to control and guide our response or not. Our nervous system is well equipped for a motor response to emotion. But we are also able, with practice, to pause in our response – say count to ten – and think about what is happening and the outcome we desire. We can acquire a level of discipline; of self-restraint. I think this is often called character or even virtue. Desirable traits are pursued by religions and certain ancient philosophies. There is often a sense of shame or guilt involved to add motivation. It is also instilled by military discipline. Our legal system prescribes and proscribes a variety of behaviors. In short, such response come from education. Moral education is a major part of emotional education – an education in values and a commitment to them in daily living. We call this conscience.

Borsodi wrote:

> *"To appreciate the full importance of this one must bear in mind that one can feel not only pain and pleasure but learn how to feel and to react emotionally with approval and inclination to the spectacle of beauty, to the discovery of truth and to actions which are good, and with aversion and repulsion to ugliness, to the triumph of error, to actions which are evil. It is because of this that right-education of the emotions develops sensitivity to scruples of conscience, imbues the individual with the feeling of duty and obligation, and in sum, cultivates the conscience.*

Emotional education begins in the home. At birth the infant has two feelings: hunger and the need to be love. Those needs are first fulfilled at the mother's breast. Our emotional response to life is developed in the family and in the community and in the church. Why should schools discard this vital need? The need for emotional development only increases as the child grows and especially with puberty. The young will continue to need guidance as they mature into adulthood.

Borsodi advocated: "Implanting of the right kind of emotional habits and attitudes … providing it on the basis of rational planning." He added: "The plasticity of man's instincts makes it inevitable that he will fill this 'vacuum' by acquiring such emotional attitudes as are necessary if he is to live at all." Better forethought than mere chance development.

A psychologist was cited: "Attitudes are not faculties, but neither are they fiction… There must be something to account for the consistency of conduct. It is the meaningful resemblance between activities and their congruence with one another that leads the psychologist inescapably to postulate some such generalized forms of readiness (to see and to act)."

From American psychologist Gordon Allport: "Without guiding attitudes, the individual is confused and baffled. Some kind of preparation is essential before he can make a satisfactory observation, pass a suitable judgement, or make any but the most

[63] I think Korzybski got into this process more rigorously.

primitive reflex type of response. Attitudes determine for each individual what he will see and hear, what he will think and what he will do. To borrow a phrase from Will James, they 'engender meaning upon the world; they draw lines about and segregate an otherwise chaotic environment; they are our methods for finding our way about in an ambiguous universe.'"

Borsodi wrote:

> *"There are three student attitudes so obviously essential to effective schooling that their validity can be taken for granted. … The first of these is an attitude of genuine willingness toward the observance and the acceptance of discipline in the classroom, in the school, and on the campus. … The second of these attitudes is willingness to study and recognition of the importance of learning. …. Finally, there is the attitude of respect for the teacher and toward the institution in which they are privileged to study."*

Students who do not accept these principles, he added, should not be permitted in any properly organized school. The students who wish to learn have the right to do so and it is the obligation of the educator to "protecting them from being emotionally infected by students who have been emotionally mis-educated. … Schools exist to teach. …. They are not reformatories." There should be no compulsory attendance. The egalitarian right of every child to attend school "is a degradation of the democratic dogma." "The moment a student ceases to learn, Borsodi concluded, his rights to schooling cease to exist."

A corollary is "that the institution and the teachers must deserve to be respect." The process of right education begins with the teacher – "his own character must inspire the right emotional attitude in all those who come in contact with him. He must not only be a master of the subjects he teaches – any lack of knowledge in this respect will obviously engender a disrespectful attitude in those he is pretending to teach – but if his character in other respects is bad, … he will not only fail to command a respectful attitude, he will tend to create an attitude of general contempt for teachers." Like a priest or minister "he cannot avoid making a profession of his character and personality." "The teacher's profession is truth and spreading the truth, and character-building is essential if he is to create truth-seekers."

Borsodi described two levels of emotional experiences: mild and strong. Mild emotional experiences, like the way people greet each other, can have an accumulative effect. It instills an attitude of habitual courtesy.

Strong emotional experiences can have an immediate and lasting effect. They can come as surprises or they can be planned, as in festivals, rituals and ceremonies. These are particularly powerful as rites of passage.

Borsodi described three emotional climacterics, three periods in the life of every individual, which produce enduring emotional attitudes – either hygienic or traumatic. These stages involve both profound physiological and psychological transformations. They involve both physical and emotional education.

1. The Infantile Climacteric: This starts with the shock of birth, of awakening in a world outside the womb. The care the newborn receives is defining. That depends on the preparation of the parents and especially the mother. Parents can respond by instinct and custom or they can become more fully informed of

this universal experience. There are others involved include kin, siblings and professional caregivers. Since World War II especially there have been any number of books about childcare.

2. The Adolescent Climacteric: This stage begins with the onset of puberty. This occurs during school years and the schools must be part of the process. It was on this period of life, Borsodi noted, that Nicholas Grundtvig and the Danish Folk School movement focused. Many cultures have rites of passage for this time of life.
3. The Adult Male and Female Climacterics: This occurs during the age between forty and fifty. Menstruation ceases for women and both men and women begin to feel a decline in vitality. This is a period when adult education is of utmost value.

The demand for education is not only coursework but, Borsodi wrote, there are four activities that need to be a part of the educational experience.

1. Inaugural Emotive Events. There are a number of these beginning with enrollment in school. That itself is an emotive event. Borsodi wrote: "When learning is robbed of this almost sacramental character by a failure to ritualize each step in it, education as a process is not only cheapened, it is negatively-valued." Borsodi extended this to the beginning of the study of any subject – each has a tradition, a service it provides.
2. Terminal Emotive Events: As with matriculation, so with graduation, with promotion from class to class, with examines and even at the end of the school day.
3. Weekly Dedicatory and Inspirational Services: The Christian world calls it chapel, but it includes any event with the purpose of inspiring, affirming, and renewing pledges.
4. Celebrations and Festivals: Borsodi summed it up: "Every traditional festival and national holy day, and every significant anniversary, should be used to stage a dramatic pageant, and with oratory, music and singing, and procession, transform it into a deeply moving and deeply impressive emotional experience of the right kind."

Emotive values can be built into the campus, into architecture, monuments, gardens, art; in beauty. It may also be incorporated into dress, perhaps uniforms.

Borsodi advocated counseling services for students who are experiencing emotional difficulties. And it need not be limited to students. The teacher, of course, is responsible for their student's emotion experiences and that includes coming to their aid as needed.

To close this chapter, Borsodi recommended the position of a Director of Emotional Education to formalize the program in the school.

Chapter XIII: Perceptual Education: The Cultivation of Sensitivity

We are largely defined by sense perception but not entirely. An overemphasis on sensation leads to mechanistic psychology such as behaviorism which denounces the role

of mind in human affairs. We are thus considered to be the effect of external stimuli or biological instinct.

Education is about planned experience in contrasted to chance experiences. Borsodi observed:

> *"The distinction between experiences which are perceptual and those which are introspective in nature, between experiences which have their ground in sensation and those which have their basis in recollections, imaginations, intuitions and revelations, whatever this 'inactions' be called, is, from the standpoint of curriculum building, enormously important."*

In contrast, intellectual education, which represents the bulk of the curriculum, has little if any education of the perceptions. He wrote of the student: "Their senses have not been sensitized. They are blind to the beauties of nature and of art; they are deaf to the beauties of song and music; they are insensible to the beauties of poetry." Borsodi referenced Maria Montessori as a vivid example of sensitizing the perceptual faculty; albeit only for the very young. This is a process that must be continued throughout life.

There is a profound difference between animal and human perception. Animals react to sensation. It is instinctual. Humans do react but reflect on what they experience. We do learn directly but we also have a deeper, appreciative, understanding. It is deliberate and self-conscious, involving "discrimination, interpretation, recognition, recollection and classification of perceptions." Such appreciation (understanding) is reflected in art, particularly painting. It is also cultivated in the scientist who explores, interprets and tests perception. Science and art come together in works such as those by Audubon and Faber. There is a difference between looking and seeing. Biologist Louis Agassiz had his students repeatedly draw specimens until he was satisfied that they really saw what was before them.

Borsodi wrote: "in educating the whole man so far as his perceptions are concerned, the goal ought to be: every individual not only a music lover but a vocalists or instrumentalist; and every student not only an art-lover but participant in the creative and interpretive arts."

Chapter XIV: Inrospectional Education: The Cultivation of the Self

Seeking education of the faculties other than those of an intellectual nature is breaking new ground. This includes introspection. Introspection includes "acts of intuition, recollection, imagination and conception." Introspection is a form of thinking: "it is thinking subjectively and not objectively; it is thinking not for the purpose of comprehending noetic problems nor for the purpose of controlling and directing action, but purely for the sake of self-comprehension; for the purpose of understanding, of integrating, and of realizing the Self." It is being thoughtful. It carries the admonition from the Bhagavad Gita: "Do not be impelled by the fruits the task might bring to thee."

Introspection is about the inner life. It can be called spiritual. It often begins later in life. It is essential to the education of the whole man. Scientific psychologies, however, tend to consider the inner experience taboo. It cannot be weighted and measured and thus discarded as unscientific. Introspection can be cultivated. It includes arts, music, painting, poetry; the cultivation of good taste. It is essential to humanization.

For too many there is little sense of the self, of true self-consciousness. There is thus little difference between the state of sleep and what is called "awake." Borsodi cited Gurdjieff and Ouspensky's "elaborate Esoteric philosophic system based upon this undeniable empiric fact: that the whole person of most individuals is without any real unity other than of their physical body; that most persons have no integrated personality that serves to be called a Self; that for all but a very few introspective individuals, the inner life is but a flux of conflicting impulses, sensations, thoughts, tendencies, beliefs, desires, memories; and that there is no single "I", but a plurality of "I's" of which the one which spoke or acted at any given time was a mere matter of chance."

In conclusion, Borsodi wrote: "The cultivation of the Self, the integration of the Self, and the realization of the Self is impossible without the cultivation of introspection."

Chapter XV: Axiologic Education: The Cultivation of Values

Scientific progress has had a severe impact on values. Nietzsche wrote extensively about that. Liberal educators tried to preserve them. Axiologist tried to better understand values. Axiology is, or should be, according to Borsodi, the science of values. He did a lot of this work at the University of Melbourne.

Values are emotional rather than intellectual. They are what we base our judgments on – not as much reason as feeling, or a sense of right and wrong, good and bad. We take their importance too lightly. We give lip service to values, often saying one thing, doing another. It is a rare person today who lives by a set of core values. It is a failure of modern education to teach them particularly higher education. "Nothing represents a greater challenge to education than the task of making the individual aware of the real nature of his values – the convictions which actually shape his life – than equipping every individual with a rational method for testing his values and of inspiring him with the determination to live, both at home and in his work, both personally and politically, in accordance with them. … Emotional education must therefore not only be perceptual and Inrospectional, it must also be axiological."

Chapter XVI: Volitional Education: The Cultivation of the Will

Borsodi observed: "The term will, the idea of will-power, and the act of willing, are today considered psychologically old-fashion." It is a recent loss. Throughout history, until relatively recently, willpower has been a virtue.

Will is exercised in contravention of intuitive impulse. The will becomes distinctive when choices are made that are "difficult, laborious, unpleasant." Wishing is not will. Will is acting. It is the final phase that begins with "reflecting, imagining, wishing, choosing; followed by deciding; but it will not culminate in action in accordance with the decision taken without the act of willing." It results in motor action. Driving himself to obey duty is an exercise of the will. "To exercise will is to direct one's mind and one's body to do that which, without such action, the individual would not do." It is a deeply emotional action. It evokes counter-emotions. It requires courage, persistence, determination. It takes will to move from plan to accomplishment. Willing is a planned and premeditated action.

Borsodi wrote:

> *"I know of no better concrete illustration of willing than that represented by the action which I am myself performing at this time, roughly between three and four o'clock on the afternoon of January 30, 1960, in writing these lines in my study in Ahmedabad, India. This is the anniversary of the day when Gandhi was killed. For all of India it is a holy day. I was invited by friends to attend services to commemorate the day which began at six o'clock in the morning. To attend the services, I had to get up at four-thirty, nearly two hours before daylight. As a result, I was unable to do the stint of writing which I try to finish every morning; I was unable to get back to my typewriter until the afternoon. The afternoon is hot; I am tired and sleepy; every impulse in mind and body clamours for relaxation and for rest. Yet I am forcing myself to finish the particular work which I started yesterday, and forcing myself to do it by what has been from time immemorial called an act of will.*

He wanted to write, and he wanted to rest. He chose to write and forced himself to do so. That took willpower.

Can the will be educated? Should it be included as part of the curriculum? And what methods are required?

That the will can be educated was once universally accept. There is a large literature about this. The treatment of mental illness is an exercise of the will: the patient must learn to take responsibility for his or her actions. The therapeutic method is a form of education in willpower. That is true in the pursuit of physical health. Fad and fashion point to a weak will.

Willing is a conscious process. It is a faculty of the conscious mind. And the conscious mind can be educated. By definition, consciousness is something we have the ability to control. Will is a habit: the more we do something the easier it becomes to do.

A strong will must be cultivated. That cultivation must be made part of the curriculum. Good students exhibit strong will. Weak-willed students are usually poor students. Merely memorizing text does not cultivate the will. Will is action. It is practice, or in Borsodi's system praxiology.

In terms of method, Borsodi distinguishes between behavioral conditioning, which dates from Pavlov and his dogs and Watson's behavioral psychology, and the cultivation of deliberate willpower. It is also a matter of initiative. The pursuit of higher learning can be arduous; it was never, across the generations, from ancient times and around the world, intended to be easy.

Chapter XVII: The Organization of the Educational System

"The educational system cannot be thought about in terms of classrooms only." Education begins before schooling and continues throughout life. It includes the influence of others, of newspapers, of cinema, radio and television, the church or temple, political parties and social movements. All of these are in need of reform.

Right education involves "the task of family revivification and social renaissance." It is about the whole culture. We must therefore organize education not only in the schools but outside of them. Right education seeks to humanize at least the determining minority of society who lead the reorganize of society along humane lines. The teacher, of course is a leader and the teacher must work both within the school and outside of it in the community.

Borsodi provided his idea of the structure of the education enterprise in his Chart V:

EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL, THE HOME, AND THE CULTURE

The First Six Years	Pre-School Education: The Home, The Culture
From Six to Twelve	Primary Education: The Common School, The Home, The Culture
From Twelve to Sixteen	Secondary Education: The Vocational School, The Academic School, The Home, The Culture
From Sixteen to Eighteen	Tertiary Education: The Folk School, The College, The Home, The Culture
From Eighteen to the End of Schooling	University Education: The Professional School, The Home, The Culture
Post-Schooling to the End of Life	Adult Education: The School of Living, The Home, The Culture

Chapter XVIII: Education in the School

Education is a planned and organized activity. It should be done locally, not under national programs. Saying that, the education of the home and in the community at large is largely spontaneous and unplanned. That too is important and should not be diminished by government programs as has happened in many developed countries and was being pursed in India.

We should not make the schools a tool for social programs. The functions of the public school involve mastery of essential and that should take relatively few years. According to Grundtvig, once basic education is completed, the young should do meaningful work: "During these formative years," Borsodi summarized: "they should grapple with the realities of life, and experience the most important of all means for disciplining themselves intellectually and emotionally – the discipline of useful and productive work." And then comes one or two years guided by philosophy and inspiration – the Folk Schools. Borsodi concurs.

Borsodi described four "Ways and Means" for support of schools:

1. Private means by payment by the family for all cost of educating their children.
2. Autonomous educational foundations. Many colleges and universities are supported by endowments. Such foundations may be private or public or a mix of both. Autonomy, freedom from control by special interests, is the key term.
3. Schools may also be supported by special interest such as churches, professions of industries. These outside interests define the school or college program.
4. State funding and control of education with all the implications such control suggests. Borsodi did not believe governments should be in charge of education.

In short: "Humanization, general education, and the education of the whole man is a family, not a state responsibility." Ditto compulsory religion and special interests. Students should be free to choose their school.

The absence of outside influence also applies to academic freedom. To achieve their mission as defined by Borsodi, and this is a keystone of his personal philosophy, schools should be autonomous, free and independent; they belong to the communities that host them. Borsodi never intended they be large institutions; rather the opposite.

Note Regarding the Following Chapters: The following five chapters address the pre-adult ages. Borsodi covered these stages in greater detail in *Education and Living* (link)[64]. Given that our focus is on adult education I will skip the review of these chapters. They can be found by those interested in on-line version of *The Education of the Whole Man* (link)[65] and in my chapter on "Education and Living." I gave a good deal of thought to including these chapters, but the summarization would be extensive and in the interest of shortening an already lengthy chapter, will skip them. In short, as would be expected, Borsodi had a lot of suggestions about improving schools and schooling. I would note, they are worth reading on your own.

Chapter XIX: Education in the First Six Years

The Educational Function of the Home: Character Building

Chapter XX: Education from Six to Twelve

The Function of the University: Mastery and Leadership

Chapter XXI: Education from Twelve to Sixteen

The Foundation of Secondary Education: Preparation for work.

Chapter XXII: Education from Sixteen to Eighteen

The Function of the School and College: Vision

Chapter XXIII: From Eighteen to the End of Schooling

The function of the University: Mastery and Leadership

Chapter XXIV: Adult Education

Education to the end of formal schooling takes students through professional schools; in short what we would consider university-level courses. At that time, age 21 was considered the age of maturity. Today it is eighteen. Borsodi uses the term adult to mean lifetime learning. Education does not end with a professional degree or PhD. It begins following formal schooling. Indeed, the education following formal studies is of a very different nature than that found in the classroom.

There is little prospect of changing the existing educational system. Something new is needed, something revolutionary. That will happen through grassroots initiatives.

Borsodi places high value on tradition. The problem is the effect of modern scientific education. He wrote: "The problem cannot arise in a culture where tradition, rather than science, is the determining factor in education. It is also a product of the French and American Revolutions but accelerated with the industrial revolution. Modernism has now swept or is sweeping away traditional culture around the world. The change in culture has been rapid and is accelerating. A vast variety of new institutions have been established; particular mass culture. There are too many individuals and groups that have "an axe to grind."

[64] Download *Education and Living*: https://research.library.kutztown.edu/solbooks/1/
[65] Download *The Education of the Whole Man*: https://research.library.kutztown.edu/solbooks/2/

There are remnants of the past: "Libraries and museums; parks, botanical and zoological gardens; sports and playgrounds; concerts and lecture; camping and traveling [that] provide educational experiences for adults which are wholesome, which develop and cultivate their personalities."

Borsodi wrote: "The essence of right-education is truth-seeking – the search for and the presentation of the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth." This is not the province of modern public schools.

It is not so much a return to tradition and culture as it is a return to humanization rather than condition; to re-education of society itself. It only takes a handful to lead the way. They may be students as well as teachers. "But if they are to be helped to escape from being spoiled by the prevailing atmosphere of selfishness and cynicism, they must be equipped with a philosophy of living in which the role they are to play in society is explicitly outlined, and in which the function of membership in a determining elite is not subordinated to self-seeking vocationalism pure and simple."

It also calls for organization; for some addition to the existing school system in every community. The program is more than just classes. The school should be a community planning center. It should be a cultural center. It should be an arts and crafts center. It should sponsor drives to provide for libraries, museums and other cultural features; for lectures, concerts, dances, theatre, festivals. And it should not be forgotten that it is a school; its function is education. It should stand apart from particular movements yet "bringing to bear upon them all the resources of unbiased knowledge and wisdom."

Re-education is adult education directed at correcting the errors which abound in both tradition and custom. Re-education is not superfluous extra-curricular activities and meaningless courses. Borsodi noted that he spelled this out in detail in *Education and Living*, Volume II, pp. 683-702.

The job of creating these schools and of drawing students is not easy. It starts with the formation of a self-conscious minority and grows on its own merit.

Chapter XXV: Education in the Home

The proper education of children, Borsodi reiterated, starts in the home. The cultivation of "the personality – characteristics of a normal human being" start with the mother and father. Blackstone noted three requirements of parents under common law: protection, education and maintenance; and the most important he thought was education. Having both parents employed, by turning the fostering of children over to impersonal agencies, we should not be surprised at the growing ranks of juvenile delinquents. This is particularly true in large urban environments. The village provides a better environment, a more secure environment. There is nothing that provides the emotional security of the family.

Chapter XXVI: Education by the Culture

Modern culture is "crassly materialistic." "It ridicules traditional spiritual and moral values, … ignores the Amorlism and Moral Relativism which are implicit in this devotion to higher and higher material scales of living."

Our materialistic culture wastefully plunders nature and resources. It is "engaged in a veritable war upon the soil, the forest, the water, the flora and fauna, and even the atmosphere essential to organic life." The cost of human life is high.

"Finally, it is destroying itself emotionally. Speed, more speed, and still more speed – with utter disregard to the rhythms of nature – is being used to destroy man's mind and soul."

The schools "gloss over and minimize" these social pathologies. Mass advertising is engaged in condition "the whole population to accept modern culture, and to ignore anybody and everybody who in the slightest degree questions what it calls Progress and who may be pleading for some balance essential to the maintenance of mental and physical health."

Properly lead and responsible adult education could provide the necessary re-education.

Chapter XXVII: The Organization of Teaching

We need a new approach to education. We need to re-examine existing methods and consider new methods and old methods now neglected. There is no one perfect method of teaching – we need a plurality of methods. It is more than classroom instruction and lecturing, textbooks and examinations. The progressive educational system is not that method.

There seems a universal push to abolish literacy. There is a steady decline in the number of people who read a book of any kind. Too much of our media and popular literature is degrading. We need a freshness and originality.

Educational methods must meet the needs of all – from manual education to the mentally gifted.

"Education begins not with self-instruction but with the teaching by others". It starts at birth. Learning skills develop "until he becomes physically and mentally able to study on his own initiative – until self-instruction in contrast to teach by others, can take place. Real instruction "begins probably during adolescence or when he begins to be self-conscious in the full meaning of the term."

Nonetheless, we always learn from others. We must continue to cultivate learning from others.

Chapter XXVIII: Logical Methods of Teaching

Every method of teaching for the conscious mind is characterized by a logical process. Borsodi proposed "Two Canons of Logical Teaching: (1) Logical teaching should produce comprehension of the subject-matter taught, and (2) Logical teaching should produce mastery in the doing – in the practice and application – of what has been taught.

There are six methods of logical teaching that conform to these canons:

1. Teaching by rational compulsion. The crudest and least effective means, it is, however, required for early childhood education. There are certain disciplines

that must be required through the schooling experience. Students gradually learn to imposed discipline on themselves.

2. Didactic teaching, which takes place in the classroom, involves the teacher "furnishing the students facts, and trains him in procedures and practices." Borsodi proposed a "reader" of essential material that must be learned and which will "lead [the student] to discover not only the truths it contains but the poetry of language – the revelation of the enrichment which comes from mastering new words and ideas and from reading the great geniuses who have created the best of their nations' cultural heritage."
3. Discursive teaching is learning by dialog; the seminar and tutorial methods.
4. Heuristic teaching: "of which the essence is leading the student to discover the truth about a matter for himself." This does not necessarily mean that the experience is unguided and unplanned.
5. Activity Teaching is "as old as mankind." This is learning through motor activity. It is not activity for activities sake; not recreational but designed as a learning experience. The results are practical. It is a form of apprenticeship, but it is the learning of many crafts rather than merely a vocation.
6. Teaching by example – the teacher teaches not only what he/she knows but what he/she is. This is walking the talk.

Chapter XXIX: Illogical Methods of Teaching

Illogical methods are directed at both the conscious and the unconscious mind. There are at least three illogical teaching methods:

1. Magical methods. This is the way of the shaman. It is something of a "primitive science."
2. Arbitrary compulsion is the use of corporal punishment in teaching.
3. Teaching by permissive spontaneity such as found in the Montessori method but often perverted in the public-school classroom.

In short, Borsodi advises against the use of illogical methods in teaching. There are better ways.

Chapter XXX: Alogical Methods of Teaching

Alogical teaching is directed to the subconscious mind. It may include hypnotism but usually the student is conscious of the process. There are important aspects of education that cannot be dealt with by mere logic and this includes the education in values. It is not learning about values but cultivating the feeling for values. Borsodi proposed four canons of alogical teaching:

1. The Law of Impression: Everything we experience leaves some impression on our minds and particular at the subconscious level. There are weak impressions and strong impression. Weak impressions often repeated can leave enduring behavior. Strong impression can be traumatic. It also includes mystical and religious experiences; the wonders of nature such as the Grand Canyon or Himalayas; great works of art and architecture; the reading of great works of literature (and Borsodi noted Thoreau's *Walden*); sunrises and sunsets, the

starry night sky, flowers and trees, etc. As a method of education, the aim is healthy impression and the guiding of experiences.

2. The Law of Repetition: Repetition is an indispensable method for learning. That includes manners and good reading. Repetition of bad experiences also reinforces behavior which may produce neurosis or criminal behavior. Repetition is used in psychical education to teach health. It is used in yoga and the martial arts.
3. The Law of Association: Our minds are associational "machines." The process is automatic, but it can be cultivated and guided.
4. The Law of Stimulation: Stimulus may attract or repel us. There are rewards and penalties. Some impulses need to be repressed; others encouraged. Conditioning is a widely recognized psychological idea. Some conditioning is need for humanization, but it is also widely employed to dehumanize. It is used in advertising, propaganda, brainwashing. Certain psychologies hold that it is the only way to form human behavior; not reason. That raises the question of who decides what is right. It can be self-imposed as a tool for discipling learning.

Borsodi wrote further of alogical exercise in yoga. It has six purposes: attentiveness, concentration, meditation or introspection, imagination, endurance and "dislinking" – or non-attachment. All of the methods of yoga have a place in the classroom. It is in part physical education. And there are three approaches to yoga: Devotion, understanding and action. Borsodi provided further description of the six yoga practices. India has, over the centuries, he noted, developed yoga into a very high art.

Borsodi further discussed non-attachment. It is a key principle in the Gita – acting without thinking of the fruits of action. He stated that as a Humanist, he does not ascribe to the extreme of the doctrine of absolute non-attachment. But it is important to distinguish between pride and vanity. There is also merit in the idea that work is its own reward. "Learning, above all, ought to be its own reward."

The School, the teacher, is hard-pressed by the realities of the world around. Involuntary conditioning is too prevalent of our culture. Pavlov and Watson popularized it. The world was seeing political conditioning in recent history, such as in Germany, and ongoing with the Cold War. It is seen in advertising and Borsodi was a strident critic of (and expert in) advertising. I have written about his books and position on advertising in other chapters. It is also found in manipulative techniques in interpersonal relations and there are books readily found about suggestion and persuasion.

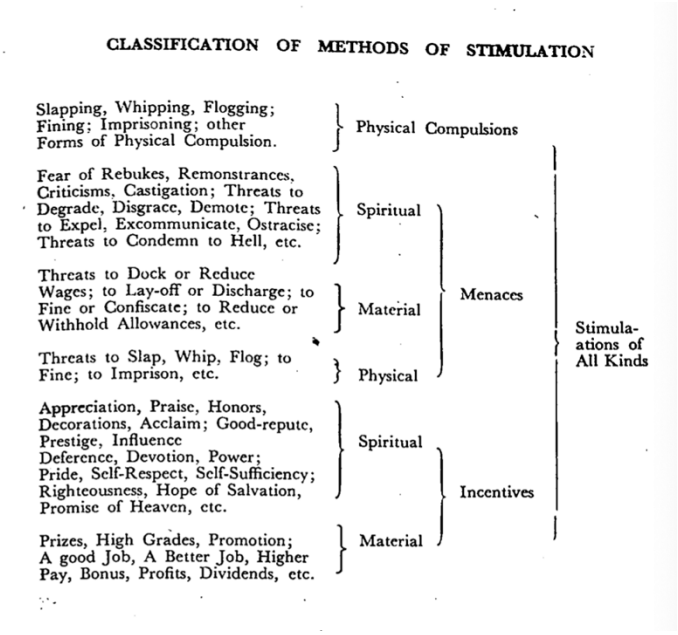
The School must create a safe environment. It must make students aware of what is going on around them. In adult education, re-education, the effects of conditioning must be addressed and nullified. Right education must teach a certain skepticism; a continual re-examination of ideas and assumptions. The problem-centered framework is designed to do that. This imposes a very high moral responsibility on teachers.

Strengthening the imagination is also part of alogical education. Imagination is a natural endowment unique to humans. Through imagination we develop enthusiasm and conviction. We put things together in a meaningful way. It is not itself a logical process but can be shaped rationally – for better or worse.

It is through imagination that we achieve creativity. It is through imagination that we create ideas and ideals and ideologies. It is also through imagination that we employ suggestion.

There was a popular literature at that time on self-hypnosis. There was also a growing literature on self-help using suggestion. It is clear that the teacher makes liberal use of suggestion.

Borsodi provided this chart of methods of stimulation:



Borsodi goes further into the theme of inspirational teaching. A teacher needs the gift of inspiration. That may take a logical or non-logical form. Inspiration may come through speech or writing. Inspiration can take the form of music or drama, through weekly services which typically combine verbal as well as musical forms of inspiration.

Borsodi emphasizes two things:

> *"First, that if this proposal for a system of education which educates the whole man and so makes possible the humanization of mankind is to be realized, we must not only solve the practical problems with which education is confronted today, we must also have faith and vision.*
>
> *"And the second is this, that in all the years I have devoted to the study of higher education in America, the most terrible thing which our colleges and universities do to the young men and women who go to them, is to turn them into an army of disillusioned cynics; into men and women who know all about the seamy-side of those whom they thought great heroes; who think enthusiasm, childish; heroism, silly; sacrifice, stupid; faith, folly; vision, delusion.*

He cautions:

> *"It is part of the tragedy of mankind that it is much easier to evoke self-sacrifice by firing people with hatred than inspiring them with love. It is much more difficult to evoke selfless dedication by appealing to reason and compassion.*
>
> *"But it can be done."*
>
> *"And it must be done if educators are to find full compensation in their work, …*

Borsodi continued to list others who must find satisfaction in the services they render such as doctors who seek healing, lawyers who seek justice, engineers who seek to build a better world, architects who pursue the beautiful, and

> *"social scientist and philosophically minded leaders [who] devote themselves to creating a more wholesome life both for man and for society. … To inspire the necessary idealism; to maintain the necessary enthusiasm; to instill a life-long dedication to the work to*

which the educable elite should devote themselves; and to keep them devoted to the task of ennobling the work which the rank of manually gifted must perforce do, it is of the utmost importance that education should rise above specialization and mere technology … creating a better life and building a better social order can be done in only one way, by teaching individuals to incorporate in what they do and in what they build and what they produce from day to day, beauty and harmony, reason and truth, concern and consideration, tolerance and humanism."

In every nation, said Borsodi, there are men and women who rise to higher standards of living:

"The lives of all these men, and of the countless men and women whose contributions have received no such worldwide recognition, furnish proof positive that it is possible for a man to get full satisfaction out of a life devoted to the realization of an ideal. They furnish proof positive that it is possible to retain the initial idealism of youth throughout the whole of one's life, and to maintain through all the inevitable discouragements and defeats, the enthusiasm which is essential if ideals are to be realized and translated into action.

If a better life and a better world is realized, it will be because teachers and artists and musicians, economists and sociologist, lawyers and financiers, engineers and architects dedicated their lives to the task of right-education in all that they do."

Thus Spoke Borsodi.

Chapter 12

Seventeen Problems.

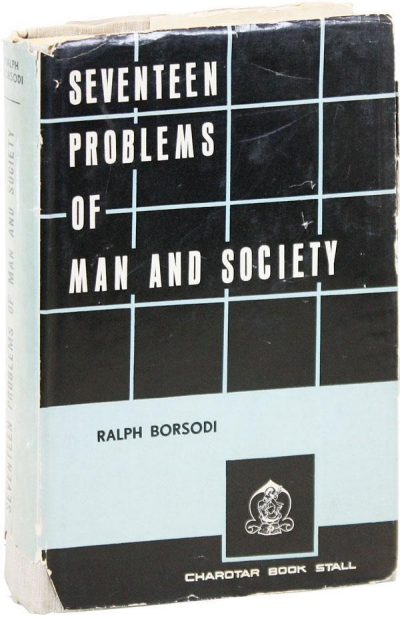
The book *Seventeen Problems of Man and Society* was Borsodi's last published text on his educational system. It was published in 1968. Let me start this review by briefly summarize the development of Borsodi's educational system.

In *This Ugly Civilization* Borsodi argued for the education of quality mindedness and proposed addressing ten barriers to achieving that state of being. Five years later, in 1934, Borsodi established his School of Living which produced a considerable volume of educational material, including periodicals, until the US entered World War II. In 1940 he began a seminar series on the major problems of living, beginning at Oberlin University, and continued those during the war years at Suffern, drawing a large number of participants.

In 1948 Borsodi published his two volume *Education and Living*. In that work he formalized his problem-centered system. He wrote critically of the state of education. He also described, in some detailed, the objective of his School of Living: Normal Living.

In 1945 Mildred Loomis became Director of Education of the School of Living and the headquarters was moved to her homestead near Dayton, Ohio. She took over daily operations of the School while Borsodi concentrated on research and writing. In 1950, Borsodi moved to Florida and shortly begin the establishing the University of Melbourne. At Melbourne, Borsodi and friends brought the problem-integrated framework to a higher level of development.

Then came a highly productive stay in India working with a group of enthusiastic supporters. There he produced the *Pan-Humanist (Decentralist) Manifesto* and completed the manuscript for *The Education of the Whole Man* (published in 1963). In 1960, as he finished the manuscript, Borsodi became seriously ill and was hospitalized. After a second hospitalization, his health clearly failing, he returned to the US, to a new home in Exeter, New Hampshire where he convalesced for a couple of years. We will pick up on that story below.



Borsodi's energy returned. He became intensely involved in a variety of projects and returned to writing. In 1968 he published *The Seventeen Problems of Man and Society*. He had, as noted in the chapter on *The Education of the Whole Man*, intended to write sixteen volumes. He wrote *Seventeen Problems* as an introduction to this series; now with more volumes for the three new problem statements. He continued to work on the volume series to the end of his life but none of these was published.

Seventeen Problems is a challenging book. It is encyclopedic; it is literally a detailed, narrative outline of his system. Borsodi's approach, being an economist and accountant by

profession, was detailed and analytic. He created a taxonomy of concepts that itself is astonishing. There is just a lot of material. However, as I will demonstrate below, taken one chapter at a time, this book is indeed very manageable.

Seventeen Problems is a seminal book. Borsodi's system is an original contribution to the art and science of true human progress: the progress not of the material pursuits but of our humanity. It is the work of a brilliant and dedicated mind and the product of decades of not only research and writing but experimentation and organizations. That Borsodi was 80 when he finished it is itself astonishing. But even then, he was far from done. His mind retained an intensity, an acuity and a high level of creativity until his death.

Borsodi understood that the human mind was a problem-solving organism. It is not just a storage container for school subjects, but an awareness that comes alive when confronted by difficulty and mobilizes its unique capacities for memory and imagination, for a sense of past and future, for language and reason, to find solutions, to make life better. He was a pioneer in this understanding and in the pursuit of systems of problem solving that could resolve the increasing complexity of modern life. The times, as he and others clearly understood and worked to develop, require new tools, advances in our capacity to think, to plan and to achieve objectives. Borsodi should be granted the honor of being recognized as in the front ranks of this movement.

Borsodi was devoted to the ideas of individual liberty, of self-reliance, of economic independence. He was a humanist in the old sense that we have a duty to make society and history better. He believed that there were norms in life just as there are laws in science that must be observed. He drew from ancient wisdom and believed we could learn from the accumulated experience of the human race; he read voraciously and he remembered what he read. He sincerely believed that modern, urban-industrial society had gone off track and was degrading us.

The twenty-first century has brought tremendous advances in science and technology, in communication and access to information, but we have to ask if we have retained the capacity to solve the problems that confront us today? We see pockets of innovative problem solving that demonstrate the power of these tools when employed; but these examples are the exception rather than the rule. It does not suffice that there is a movement to "save the planet." It only matters that leaders arise and organizations are formed that can affect change, that can remediate issues, and, we might hope, can envision and pursue a better future. It is going to take a lot of work. Borsodi gave us some important material to work with.

Borsodi knew how incomplete his system was and asked that it be developed by those who followed him. For nearly a half-century since his death, few have made any attempt to carry the work to the next level. My purpose is to continue that work and to encourage others to take up his standard for the humanization of humanity. I will end this chapter with a modest proposal in that direction.

The Seventeen Problems

When Borsodi returned to the US in 1961, he brought home a massive amount of research material he hoped to use to complete a multi-volume work on the problems of

living. Mildred Loomis solicited funds to bring a young Indian student to the US to assist Borsodi in 1963. Shyam S. Chawla, who I believe was the son of the man by that name who was instrumental in bringing Borsodi to India in 1958, arrived in late July to begin editorial work on Borsodi's papers. Since Borsodi wasn't up to the task, Mildred and Chawla carted three 2'x3'x4' metal trunks of Borsodi's manuscripts and notes to Lane's End. Mildred and Shyam spent the summer summarizing 6 – 8,000 pages of material into 700 pages of typescript.

The year 1963 was a turning point for both Borsodi and Mildred. That year she started the *Green Revolution* newsletter, a significant change in format and content. That year Borsodi's *The Education of the Whole Man* was published. And, that year, work was started on what became *The Seventeen Problems of Man and Society* with Mildred taking the lead in organizing the first manuscript.

In May 1964 Mildred published a 40-page summary of the new seventeen-problem framework. It appears she circulated it for comment. It was available for 50 cents from the School of Living. In short, it appears she developed and published the first comprehensive introduction to the new seventeen problems framework. We learn that she also prepared typescript for at least several of the proposed volumes.

Borsodi, once his health recovered, completed the book in 1967. *Seventeen Problems of Man and Society* was published in 1968. It was published by Borsodi's friends in India and sold by the School of Living in the US. It is nearly 600 pages long; the publisher had required Borsodi to cut it to that length. It was intended to be the first in the series of books, a volume for each chapter. It is available free for downloading at this link[66].

Structure

The bulk of *Seventeen Problems* consists of seventeen chapters, one for each of the universal problems. There is a short preface, a short introduction that discusses "the most important problem," a Readers Guide, and, at the end of the book a short "Summa Summarum and two short indexes of Concepts and Names.

Index of Concepts and Names

Let's start at the end of the book with the Index of Concepts and the Index of Names. My feeling is that these list should be the first studied. I should add that the terms used in these lists may sound strange to the modern mind; they were back then familiar. That doesn't make them any less applicable today.

Given the incredible array of ideas explored in *Seventeen Problems*, the brevity of the three-page "Index of Concepts" is instructive. It provides a different, more subject-oriented, perspective on classification. More strikingly, given the extensive bibliography, the Index of Names is less than a page.

These lists prove a point: today we are relatively poorly informed and lack an understanding in common with a larger community. This, I would add, is precisely the failure of modern culture: There is far too little that we understand in common; that we can talk about. These lists give us those topics.

[66] Seventeen Problems of Man and Society free download: https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B1wQ6T5I3eBVWG1xT2xoZlhRRFU/edit.

Introductory Statement

On the first page of *Seventeen Problems* Borsodi stated his objective clearly:

> *"The most important problem in the world today is the problem of the philosophy by which men live and the philosophy by which society is animated. This, however, is just another way of saying that the most important problem in the world is the educational problem. For this in practice is the problem with which education deals; it deals with the whole process by which not only the rising generation but also older generations are imbued with the philosophy all are supposed to practice and which the whole social life of the community is supposed to reflect …. The essential character, sentiment and disposition of a people, of a community or country, a society or culture; the spirit which animates its manners and customs, its practices and institutions, and which is reflected in its ideals, and especially in its values – in its ethical and esthetic, its economic and teleological [purposes] attitude and practices."*

In *Seventeen Problems*, Borsodi provided his core methodology, described in far greater detail in *The Education of the Whole Man*, in a single paragraph:

> *"'The methodology used in making this study slowly evolved over the years and finally boiled down to a combination of four methods: (1) the case method, (2) the classificatory method, (3) analysis of the concepts and generalizations which emerged from the classifications, and (4) the synthesis of what the analysis revealed in terms of its applicability to each problem.' Unfortunately, I have found it necessary to make three and not just one synthesis of each problem because of the nature of the mechanism for knowing with which man finds himself burdened, one based upon Supernal evidence, one upon Objective, and one upon Intellectual. I wish I were a Monist; it would all be so much simpler! The Pluralist unfortunately has to accept complexity as inescapable."*

Finally, he cautioned the reader that he has biases:

> *"I am a convinced humanist, an agnostic on many questions), a philosophical anarchist, a pluralist, a positivist (not a relativist); a radical (in the sense of going to the root of things). , a rationalist (I believe in the ultimate criterion of reason); a decentralist, an agrarian, a distributist, a single-taxer, a money-reformer, a cooperator, a homesteader, a conservative (about many things), a reformer (about many other things), and finally an enthusiast."*
>
> *"But there are several things I am not: I am not an apologist for things as they are – not even as they are here in prosperous America. And I am not a proponent of salvation by revolution. I am not a reactionary (I am much too tender-minded for the thunder on the right), I am not a liberal (I am much to tough-minded for the thunder on the left). I am much too hard-headed to believe in a golden age, either in the past or in the future. I don't believe there is any virtue in anything either because it is old or because it is new. Virtue, it seems to me, has to do with truth, with goodness, with beauty, and not with what is old or new. I'm neither a perjorist nor an optimist; I'm a meliorist. Things can be made better, but they can be, and to me seem to being made, worse. Whether they will be made better by affluence as everybody seems to believe, or whether they will be made worse (as only Thoreau and I seem to believe), only God knows, and He hasn't confided His views about the matter to me. Come to think of it, He doesn't seem to have confided them to anybody recently. The race of prophets seems to have become extinct."*

Summa Summarium

At the end of the book we find Summa Summarium (which translates: "In total"), written in July 2, 1966, more than a year before *Seventeen Problems* was finished. Borsodi wrote (and I will quote at length):

> *"The holiest temple is not a church but a school. The holiest man is not a priest but a teacher. The holiest book is not a bible but a dictionary. The holiest study is not science, not*

art, not philosophy, not religion, but the study of the truth about how to live, how to treat your fellow men, and how to use what has been entrusted to us like decent and honest, sensitive and concerned, cultivated and considerate human beings."

"What the study of the truth teaches us – the study of the holiest of all holies – is that Man is holy, the Earth is holy, the Sunshine is holy, the Rain is holy; that all Matter, all Energy, all Nature is holy; that the Procession of the Sun above us and the Seasons here on Earth is holy; that Evolution – beginning with the Evolution of the Rocks and ending with the Evolution of Man – is holy; that the painful History in the course of which Man has lifted himself from primitive bestiality and savagery to civilized life, and from the crude craft and artistry of Aurignacian Man to the artistry and science of Confucius and Aristotle, of Gautama and Plato, of Shakespeare and Newton, of Goethe and Galileo, of Darwin, Freud and Einstein; from the painting of Altamiras to the painting of Mona Lisa's, from the carving of Lingans to the carving of Pietas; from the music of the tom tom to the music of Eroicas; from the architecture of Stonehenges to the Architecture of Taj Mahals, is the holiest of all Historiography."

"What the study of the truth about how to live teaches us is that the Rights of Man are only earned by observing the Obligations of Man; that the four great duties which constitute the Obligations of Man are (1) the obligation of conservation and economy, (2) the obligation of creation and beauty, (3) the obligation of harmony and morality; (4) the obligation to realize Man's highest potentialities. Without unreserved commitment to behavior on the basis of these values, Man can be a human animal but cannot become human in fact."

"Without the practice of conservation and economy; without the practice of art and craft, of poetry and beauty; without the practice of what Plato called 'the science of good and evil' and Confucius the 'moral law,' Man seems to be but is not in fact a human being.

"Finally, without making the supreme purpose for which we live our lives the enduring satisfactions which are existentially possible for mankind – and not the sensate gratifications of the moment nor the future salvation of our souls in some sort of paradisiac immortality – we shall fail to make ourselves into normal human beings."

"Only by rightly educating ourselves can we equip ourselves to honor those who have, in the long history of mankind, bequeathed to us all their art and science and all their painful labors and heroic sacrifices. What has been entrusted to us, we must multiply, and with it endow those who follow after us.

"Upon what the thoughtful and concerned men and women of the world do to help those teachers and those institutions dedicated to right-education are dependent not only the young but also the mature for right-direction, right-guidance, right-discipline, right-instruction and right-values."

"And this is the beginning and end of right-education."

"Wisdom, not novelty; courage, not cupidity; right-feeling, right-reasoning, right-speech, right-action, right purposes.

"Of all these products of right-education, neither courage alone nor wisdom alone are quintessential. For without courage, wisdom becomes a sharp tool in hands afraid to use it, and without wisdom, courage an equally sharp tool in hands which do not know the use to which it should be put.

Wisdom cherishes only that which makes for the development of the highest potentialities of Man.

"And courage, if it cherishes wisdom, shrinks (sic) neither from defeat nor from victory.

"Only with courage and wisdom can mankind deal with ignorance, with folly, with greed, with violence.

"Only with wisdom and courage can mankind be saved."

Bibliography

One of Borsodi's objectives was to access knowledge relevant to understanding and solving each problem. In each chapter, within the commentary, Borsodi provided extensive bibliographic references.

From the beginning, a library has always been associated with the School of Living. Since about 1940, the library had been organized around the universal problems. This structure of classification was a response to the limitations Borsodi (and others) found in the subject classification of curricula and libraries. At Melbourne the library contained over 4,000 volumes. Mildred Loomis left a Borsodi Memorial Library of 2,500.

A question in the minds of many interested in the universal problems is: What books were in that library? Unfortunately, following Mildred's death the library was dispersed. We have no list of the books in these collections. The corollary is: What would we include in a library today? That, it appears, is the more important question. I think we should also understand that the books often address more than one problem and perhaps a card (or digital equivalent) index would be a more useful way to access these books. At the present time we have the technology to form a single digital and Boolean searchable database. This was proposed as a Cove Institute project in 2000. It was named Polymath and a tablet device was proposed designed to assist users organize their own material much as Bush had proposed with Memex a half century before. The internet and search engines provide a comparable but relatively limited capacity to access and organize knowledge.

It took a bit of work, but it made good sense to compile a single bibliography of books listed in *Seventeen Problems*. That was done on a spreadsheet with the books listed according the their appearance in each chapter.

There are 1,123 books cited in *Seventeen Problems*. There are 941 unique titles. Borsodi used 182 titles more than once, in different problems. The latest publication date for these books is 1966 but the publication dates proved insightful.

Before 1900	85	
1900 – 1929	260	
1930s	211	
1940s	183	66%
1950s	214	85%
1960s	118	
Undated	51	
	1123	

In short, 85% of these books were published prior to 1960 and two-thirds prior to 1950. However, not a few of the books listed were republications of text that go back to ancient times.

Two things about this list: First it is seriously out of date; many of the titles are obscure; most forgotten. Second, it lacks reference to an incredible literature that was produced in the 1960s and 1970s and since then. There was a strong surge in books published related to the Human Potential Movement beginning in the mid-1960s. That number steadily increased, year-by-year, until about the time of the end of Borsodi's life (1977). Advances in cosmology, natural sciences and social sciences have been considerable over the last half-century. Our understanding of the world, of life and of human life has advanced to an incredible degree. These new insights must be incorporated. Digital media, of course, has given us techniques of access to information that were just barely dreamed of then.

In short, while it would be of historical value to have the original library, there is little point in trying to replicate it. We must build a new one and we can readily do so online. Saying that, I would also caution that the number of such text be limited. A small community library, and I am proposing a collection of printed books, could be very satisfactorily assembled with fewer than 10,000 titles (not including popular fiction) with a searchable index. I personally continue to find organizing a library by topic aids in browsing.

The Problems

The Seventeen Problems are divided into three groups. How these are organized was more fully addressed in the chapters about *The Education of the Whole Man* and Melbourne. The definitions of the original fourteen problems was updated by Borsodi. There are also now three more of them.

In short, Noetic problems are addressed by reason – what we know. Axiological problems –values involving emotions – by what we feel. The third, a set of nine problems, Praxiological, are about practical, daily living.

I find it useful to use a computer/digital analogy to understand beliefs and values. Values are akin to the operating system of a computer- how it works; beliefs are more like application software which we use to organize information into meaningful statement. Values are deeply embedded in the operation of the mind and they define how beliefs are formed and used. Values are like the nodes in a computer chip that switch between right and wrong, goodness and evil, beauty and ugly. The human brain uses neurons, vastly more complex than computer circuits, to do the switching. The process is essentially unconscious.

Borsodi's objective was action. The Praxiological problems are all about achieving the good life.

Part I, Noetics: Four Basic Intellectual Problems.
Problem I: Anthropic: The riddle of human nature, the problem of the nature of man's own nature. In short: Who am I?
Problem II: Ontoic: The riddle of the universe, the problem of the nature of the world in which man finds himself. In short: What is life all about?
Problem III: Etiologic: The riddle of historiography, the causes of the events which constitute the history of the world and the individual experiences constituting every biography. In short: What can I learn from the way people have lived down through time?

Problem IV: Epistemic: The riddle of communication, the problem of distinguishing between truth and error and of verifying and validating and communicating what is true. In short, how do I know what is real and true? In the previous fourteen problem list, this was an axiological problem.
Part II, Axiology: Four Basic Problems in Values.
Problem V: Telic values: Convictions and prejudices about ends and means, about the really important purposes of mankind. In short: What are the important things I should do?
Problem VI: Ethical values: The problem of good and evil. In short: What actions are right and wrong?
Problem VII: Esthetic values: The problem of beauty and ugliness. In short: Art: What makes me see things as beautiful or ugly?
Problem VIII: Economic or Utilitarian values: The problem of distinguishing between wealth (and well-being) and Illth (the opposite of wealth and well-being). In short: How do I establish a sound way of living?
Part III, Praxiology: Nine Basic Practical Problems.
Problem IX: Psycho-Physiological Problem: Mental and physical health; realizing highest potentialities.
Problem X: Occupational Problem: How we spend our time.
Problem XI: Possessional Problem: Owning and holding things.
Problem XII: Organizational Problem: The science (principles) of organizing all sorts of enterprises needed to live rationally and humanely.
Problem XIII: Production Problem: The science (principles) of organizing all sorts of production of goods and services needed to support a rational and humane life.
Problem XIV: Distribution Problem: The science (principles) of organizing all sorts of distribution of goods and services needed to support a rational and humane life.
Problem XV: Political Problem: Elimination not of differences of opinion but of force.
Problem XVI: Institutional Problem: Conservation and Reformation. To retain or change institutions.
Problem XVII: Educational Problem: Man cannot rely upon his instincts. We need a new educational model to develop that which is truly human in us.

Each chapter follows the same format. They consist of three parts. First is an introductory statement about the problem; something like a brief encyclopedia article. In it Borsodi outlines an extensive taxonomy of concepts about that problem area. His intent was to tell us pretty much every way of approaching each problem.

The second part consists of a Commentary in which he reviews finer details of definition and comparison of key terms. These comments are something on the order of long footnotes. I believe many of them reflect Borsodi's personal values.

The third part is the list of suggested readings, summarized above.

Borsodi's Statement of Problem 1

This book is challenging to most people. I don't think it was meant to be studied in solitude. It is not, however, so difficult for those motivated to learn it; those Borsodi called the determining minority. Mildred Loomis, a stalwart supporter of this system, did try to simplify the presentation of the system. As noted, she published her own brief summary of the 17 problems in 1964 and promoted and taught this system for some two decades until

near the end of her life. This abbreviated program was printed in a series of *Green Revolution* issues in 1974.

I believe Borsodi's system can be taught (or learned) in short, clear and effective segments. Following is an example I've used for the first problem. I'm going to start by restating this problem, by translating it into plain English. I'm going to change the tense from third person (mankind) to first person: what does this mean to me?

The first problem asks: What does it mean to be a human being? Why am I in this world? This is a question that has probably been asked since the first of our kind became self-conscious hundreds of thousands of years ago.

Borsodi used the term "Anthropic." It is the study of how human beings live on the Earth. Borsodi may not have heard the term Anthropocene, a term that means the era of the history of the Earth dominated by human beings. It was first used in the 1960s but didn't become popular until the 2000s. It points to a new class of problems: human impact on the biosphere. Our understanding of the nature of humankind and our effect on the Earth has made a dramatic shift since *Seventeen Problems* was written. With it we see more of how the problems are interrelated. Our impact on the world leads us to the second problem, the nature of the world we live in. It brings to the forefront the problems of beliefs and values. Indeed, it "lights up" the entire system. All seventeen problems can be brought to bear on addressing this first problem as an integral component of the whole system.

Problem One, in brief: Each of us is a conscious being. We are aware that we are alive. We wonder about what life is all about. It is in our nature that we want to know who and what we are, what is the meaning of life; We have to ask "why?"

While each of us is a unique consciousness, it is inescapable that we are each a member of the human race. We know that there are certain qualities that define us as part of our species.

One of the fundamental questions about what we are is whether we are merely a body and brain or have a mind and soul? Are we a mere accident of nature or something more? In short, is there any purpose in life?

Taken to another level, are our lives determined, subject to dogmatic conditioning, or do we have free will? Even science is divided on this question.

We must also ask how human beings differ from other animal life. Animals rely on instinct; something humans have relatively little of. Humans have a mind, consciousness, and a variety of faculties other animals, as far as we know, do not have. We have the capacity to pass on what one generation learns to the next. We also have the capacity of self-deception.

This leads to the questions of which qualities are inherited and which are acquired?

Borsodi described three qualities of energy humans share with other animals: Physical energy (which comes out of your physical form), survival energy (the instinct for self-preservation) and genetic energy (the urge to reproduce).

He identified two additional forms of energy that only human express: cultural energy, as displayed in man's efforts at self-realization and self-expression; and necrotic energy, something Freud discussed which is a tendency for self-destruction – it can be expressed in the human sense of alienation. It also applies to harmful acts committed to other humans, other life and the planet. The Anthropocene has this quality. Borsodi referred to the Freudian concept of the unconscious mind from which spring deep-seated impulses.

The conscious mind by and large defines our species. It gives us the power to overcome impulse and animal responses and, in these actions, we become more fully human. The quality of self-consciousness can be used to integrate the mind and personality.

Whether or not we can extend the qualities of human existence to the supra-conscious level is a matter of debate. Do we have extrasensory abilities? Does conscious life continue beyond the death of the body?

From birth, through the cycle of life, we each develop in our own way. I should note that the ego of each of us is an essentially random, accidental formation. It is conditioned by parents and by one's immediate social environment. As we mature, education and social experience constantly mold and modify who we are. It is this persona, for better or worse, that defines us.

Borsodi made the point that the key to a person's nature is what he or she values. Values are the second set of problems and must be considered within the context of reason. The bottom line is that we are not inherently good or bad. We have the capacity to determine which values we will allow to guide our life and to what degree we allow impulse to define our behavior.

That we are the most complex and highly evolved of all organisms is a given. The human brain is the product of four billion years of evolution of life on earth. It is designed to solve problems. It gives us qualities other animals do not have. Our consciousness means that we don't simply exist; life must have meaning. We are also creative, capable of writing poems, music, books, discovering the laws of nature, creating art and architecture.

We are not all the same. We represent an incredible range of differences and capacities. There is a tremendous plasticity in human nature. Borsodi thought egalitarianism made little sense. We must, therefore, embrace a pluralistic view of human nature. It is the diversity in nature that makes it strong. All the parts have an integral role in making the ecosystem resilient. That principle applies equally to the human species. A human community is an ecosystem just as a forest or lake is an ecosystem.

We are each what we are taught. Schools and other institutions have been created for the purpose of developing personality. All cultures have rules for guiding human behavior, standards of right and wrong (values). But man, ideally, is not just a machine that can be programed (conditioned). We each must choose to embrace or oppose the norms of our society. We must each chose how to act. The normal, healthy, person will choose in the best of interest of their family and community. This is praxiology.

Borsodi lamented the low priority given to the problem of the nature of human nature. We expend "thousands of times" as much thought, and a vast amount of money, to landing men on the moon than we do to what is more essential. He wrote: "Yet there is not the slightest doubt in my mind that if all the knowledge we already have that is significant for our problem were properly analyzed and synthesized, it would be possible for us to deal with the riddle of human nature rationally and humanely instead of as we are dealing with it now – with indescribable and inexcusable confusion, stupidity and brutality."

The major part of Borsodi's work is his exhaustive investigation of the forms, the doctrines, the ideologies which have been developed over time. There is an enormous variety to choose from. These are the many different ways we define what is true. He listed several dozen ways in which we describe human nature and groups them into several major categories. Each has a short description to help each person to decide if it is a topic that appeals to them.

I should add, that I believe a study of *The Education of the Whole Man* and *Education and Living* is prerequisite to the problem's seminars.

In his commentary, we get glimpses of Borsodi's background material. He tells us that this chapter (23 pages) was condensed from 300 pages of manuscript and these included graphic material which is was not possible to include in the introductory volume.

Always careful of the definition of terms, much of the commentary is devoted to why a particular term was used, where it came from, and why it is important. By putting these more technical items in their own section, Borsodi sought to reduce the difficulty of the chapter text.

Many of the books Borsodi listed in his reading list are classics and still readily available. They include Freud, Jung, William James, Reinhold Niebuhr, Vinoba Bhave, Aldous Huxley, Nietzsche, Emerson, Gandhi, Sri Aurobindo, Plato, Sartre, Darwin, Korzybski, Krutch, Orwell and many other names that were in vogue at the time (1968).

Development of the Problems List

13 Problems	Barriers
1. Purpose:	
2. Validation:	Individual -- 3
3. Nature:	Social—4, 5
4. Association:	
5. Gregational:	Political-- 7
6. Operational:	Educational -- 8 Religious – 9, Moral -- 9
7. Political:	Economic – 11, 12
8. Education:	Physiological -- 13
9. Ethics:	Biological – 3, 13
10. Esthetics:	Psychological – 3, 13
11. Occupation:	

12. Possessions: 13. Health:	

I think it worthwhile to review the process behind the development of Borsodi's system. The problem-integrated framework evolved over the course of a third of a century or so. I've covered each stage of this process in other chapters, so this is a highly condensed summary.

The process started with Borsodi's list of barriers to achieving a quality of life in 1929 with *This Ugly Civilization*. He offered a wide range of training and educational material during his homesteading day. He proposed an educational program at Dayton. He established his School of Living in 1934.

The problem classification began with Borsodi's habit of writing down a brief summary of the problems people brought to him or he found in literature. We know that he had both the initial list of problems and the idea of their integration by 1940. There were 13 problems presented in his seminars towards the end of World War II. The first formal public presentation of the system came with *Education and Living* in 1948 with those 13 problems. The system matured at Melbourne and in India to a list of 14 problems by 1960 and that framework was presented with the publication of *The Education of the Whole Man* in 1963. Mildred and Chawla, organizing Borsodi's notes from India, organized a new list of 17 problems which she published as brief document in 1964. *Seventeen Problems* was published in 1968. Borsodi and Mildred offered seminars on this framework for the rest of their respective lives[67].

I believe it is instructive to following this development. I have done so not only to understand the system but to further develop it.

To start with was the evolution from Barriers to Problems. This change came largely due to Borsodi's struggle to find something better than a subject-centered approach to solving problems.

I have made a very rough attempt to link the barriers (*The Ugly Civilization*, 1929) to the original 13 problems (*Education and Living*, 1948) but would not suggest this as definitive.

I think a good way to clearly state the problems is turn them into questions. The first 13 gives us this list:

1. Purpose/(Teleological): What is the purpose, my vision, in life?
2. Validation/(Epistemological): How do I know what is true?
3. Nature/(Ontological): What is the nature of nature and of human nature?
4. Association/(Association): How do I associate with other human beings?
5. Gregational/(Gregational): How do I associate with groups and how do groups associate with each other?
6. Operational/(Operational): How do we organize collective enterprises?
7. Political/(Civic): When and how should legal coercion (law) be used in a good society?

[67] Following Mildred's death, the seventeen problems program languished.

8. Education/(Education): How do we organize educational activities to improve human wellbeing?
9. Ethics/(Ethical): What makes an act right or wrong?
10. Esthetics/(Esthetics): What makes an object beautiful or ugly?
11. Occupation/(Occupation): How should a person spend the whole of his/her time?
12. Possessions/(Possessions): How should land, money, and goods be owned or possessed in order that each person can achieve optimum living?
13. Health/(Psycho-Physiological): How can I achieve maximum energy (health), both physically and mental, through a long lifetime?

Beginning at Melbourne, there was a shift in terms from what I might call ordinary language into a more, I suppose you could say, academic jargon. I've added the term used in 1957 in parenthesis. As Borsodi shifted into the 14-problem framework, increasingly under academic influence at Melbourne and in India, his presentation became more "formal." I should add that he intended to find terms that more fully described each of the problem statements.

The following table shows the shift from 13 to 14 to 17 problems.

Thirteen Problems Original List from 1948 Education and Living (Compared to Seventeen Problems list)	**Fourteen Problems** The fourteen universal problems of 1963	**Seventeen Problems:** By 1968 three problems were added, in italics
1, 2. Nature, covered human and natural (3rd of 13)	**Part I: Noetic Problems:** Three Basic Problems of Thought Problem I: The Ontologic Problem: The Riddle of the Universe Problem II: The Anthropic Problem: The Riddle of Human Nature Problem III: The Etiologic Problem: The riddle of Historiography	Part I, Noetics: Four Basic Intellectual Problems. Problem I: Anthropic: The riddle of human nature, the problem of the nature of man's own nature. Problem II: Ontoic: The riddle of the universe, the problem of the nature of the world in which man finds himself. Problem III: Etiologic: The riddle of historiography, the causes of the events which constitute the history of the world and the individual experiences constituting every biography. Problem IV: Epistemic: The riddle of communication, the problem of distinguishing between truth and error and of verifying and validating and communicating what is true. Formerly an axiological problem.
" " "		
4. Validation (2nd of 13) 5. Purpose (1st of 13) 6. Ethics (9th of 13) 7. Esthetics (10th of 13)	**Part II: Axiology: The Four Problems in Values*** Problem IV: The Epistemic Problem: The Problem of Truth and Error (Note, this became Noetic Problem IV) Problem V: The Esthetic Problem: The Problem of Beauty and Ugliness Problem VI: The Ethical Problem: The Problem of Good and Evil Problem VII: The Telic Problem: The Problem of Ends and Means	Part II, Axiology: Four Basic Problems in Values. Problem V: Telic values: Convictions and prejudices about ends and means, about the really important purposes of mankind. Problem VI: Ethical values: The problem of good and evil. Problem VII: Esthetic values: The problem of beauty and ugliness. *Problem VIII: Economic or Utilitarian values: The problem of distinguishing between wealth (and well-being) and Illth (the opposite of wealth and well-being). This was moved from the Praxiology group.*
9. Health (13th of 13) 10. Occupation (11th of 13) 11. Possession (12th of 13) 15. Political (7th of 13) 17. Education (8th of 13)	**Part III: Praxiology: Seven Problems of Implementation*** Problem VIII: The Occupational Problem: The Problem of Labour and Leisure Problem XI: The Possessional Problem: The Problem of Property and of Trusterty	Part III, Praxiology: Nine Basic Practical Problems. Problem IX: Psycho-Physiological Problem: Mental and physical health, realize highest potentialities. Problem X: Occupational Problem: How we spend our time. Problem XI: Possessional Problem: Owning and holding things.

	Problem X: The Production Problem: The Problem of Enterprise and of Efficiency Problem XI: The Political Problem: The Problem of Harmony and of Violence Problem XII: The Psycho-Physiological Problem: The Problem of Mental and of Physical Health Problem XIII: The Educational Problem: The Problem of Educating the Individual and the Culture Problem XIV: The Institutional Problem: The Problem of Social Reformation and of Social Conservation.	*Problem XII: Organizational Problem: The science (principles) or organizing all sorts of enterprises needed to live rationally and humanely.* Problem XIII: Production Problem: The science (principles) or organizing all sorts of production of goods and services needed to support a rational and humane life. *Problem XIV: Distribution Problem: The science (principles) or organizing all sorts of distribution of goods and services needed to support a rational and humane life.* Problem XV: Political Problem: Elimination not of differences of opinion but violence. Problem XVI: Institutional Problem: Conservation and Reformation. To retain or change institutions. Problem XVII: Educational Problem: Man cannot rely upon his instincts. We need a new educational model to develop that which is truly human in us.

From the table you will see how the problem framework evolved. In this table I have attempted to link the original 13 problems with the 14-problem list that followed it. That is because the shift to 14 was not simply an addition but a new structure in its own right. The 17 problems have some new classifications, and these are in italics.

The following table shows the evolution of the problem framework at the University of Melbourne. The second column came from the catalog which was printed at the time the University was opened. The first column is what was listed in *The Challenge of Asia* that came out at the time Borsodi left the University. This was the final list for that period.

The Challenge of Asia	**Melbourne Catalog**
Three Basic Problems of Belief 1. The Problem of the Nature of Nature 2. The Problem of the Nature of Human Nature 3. The Problem of Events and Their Causation **The Four Problems of Evaluation** 4. The Ethical Problem 5. The Problem of Beauty versus Ugliness 6. The Problem of Truth versus Error 7. The Problem of Purpose and Motivation	**Three Groups of Problems having to do with Outlook.** 1. Ontological – About the nature of nature 2. Anthropic – About the nature of human nature 3. Etiologic – About the nature and causes of events. **Six Groups of Problems in Evaluation**. 4. Theological – Problems of purpose and motivation 5. Epistemological – Problems of truth. 6. Esthetic – Sensitivity, good taste, technique and skill 7. Gregational Ethics – Problems in the relationship of individuals to groups and of groups to groups. 8. Ethics of Association – Problems in relationships of individual to individual

The Seven Basic Problems of Implementation 8. The Problem of Physical and Mental Health 9. The Occupational Problem 10. The Problem of Possessions 11. The Organizational Problem: Enterprise and Efficiency 12. The Civic Problem 13. The Institutional Problem: Social Conservation versus Social Reform 14. The Educational Problem: Humanization vs. Provincialization	9. Preter-social – The relationship of the individual to himself, to nature and natural forces, and to the divine. **Seven Groups of Problem concerned with the translation of basic postulates in philosophies/practices of living** 10. Educational – Cultural adjustment and humanization. 11. Psycho-Physiological – Problems of mental and physical health and therapy 12. Occupational – Problems not merely of vocation but of productive work, recreation and recuperation. 13. Possessional – Problems of access to and of acquisition of "things" of all kinds 14. Organizational – Problems of efficiency in the formation and conduct of enterprises of all kinds. 15. Civic or Political – Problems regarding the role of coercion in control of human action 16. Institutional – Organization of social systems

As can be seen from this list, the number of problems rose briefly to sixteen before settling to 14.

Following publication of *Seventeen Problems*, Borsodi continued to work on the collected volumes. In the archives at the University of New Hampshire I found a considerable volume of typescript related to these volumes. Pages from *The Education of the Whole Man* were found under Problem XVII, the educational problem. A typescript for *Education and Illth* was found, Problem VIII. A manuscript for this book was submitted for publication but has been lost. We know that Mildred assisted him on this manuscript at least five years following publication of *Seventeen Problems*.

I also know that there were more extensive manuscripts probably for all sixteen chapters proposed by Borsodi in India. He mentioned that the first chapter in *Seventeen Problems* was drawn from a much larger manuscript. I've seen two manuscripts, both apparently prepared by Mildred Loomis in 1964 when she was reviewing Borsodi's files from India with S.S. Chawla. The manuscript for the possession problem is available online from the Henry George School of Social Science, at this link[68]. This manuscript was condensed from a larger 250-page file. In short, there was once considerable development of the extended manuscript. However, it is clear these volumes, should they have been published, would need to be updated; and for that matter, new course material should be developed.

[68] Property and Trusterty: https://hgarchives.files.wordpress.com/2017/10/borsodi-property-and-trsterty-1964.pdf.

Concluding Assessment

My first impression is that the presentation of *Seventeen Problems* is more what and how; little why? The case for the problem-centered system is actually more clearly stated in the first book, *Education and Living.* There was also considerable discussion of these ideals in *The Education of the Whole Man*. Many of those ideals were found in *The Pan-Humanist Manifesto*. At root, however, is the pursuit of an optimum life; a life of economic independence, of freedom from the constraints of industrial civilization – a life Emerson defined as self-reliance and Maslow as self-actualization.

The range and scope of Borsodi's work is astonishing. Taken collectively, the five volumes I include in his education series[69] alone represent 2,221 pages of text (plus 8 - 12,000 pages of unpublished manuscript). Borsodi was prodigious. He was clearly a man of genius. He was highly analytic. He used a lot of detail; facts and figures and exhaustive classifications. His style is challenge but manageable by those motivated to learn. I have attempted to provide a more readable summary of this material.

While Mildred made a good effort to translate the material into something more understandable, the system was never offered in a form that could be widely and readily adopted. So, where do we go with this? First of all, is a major update of the system to reflect further accumulated knowledge and methodology. I also see two principle issues: 1) a concise statement of his philosophy and theory, and 2) an effective program for presentation of the system.

The first of these is the problem of a coherent statement of the philosophy behind this system, the reason why it should be studied at all. The question is, what were Borsodi and Mildred trying to achieve? We have a lot of fragments but no systematic statement. It has taken roughly 250 pages to present a summary of Borsodi's ideas on education. What is suggested is a short "primer" that lists and defines Borsodi's principles.

The second issue is translating this system into something readily applicable today. The seminar approach is valid. We could use a workbook. We also have digital presentation media that was lacking a half century ago. I believe attractive and effective presentations could be made and made available over the internet. Tutoring and webinars could also be made available to guide students.

Could we improve the organization of the list of problems? I've traced how the system evolved over the years. Borsodi was well aware that it would need continued development. I will have a bit more about this below.

In writing this chapter I found it interesting that Borsodi moved the economics problem from the practical group to axiology – values; threating economics as a problem of values, a problem of what is right or wrong. There are of course two closely related practical problems: production and distribution; indeed, as he said elsewhere, all the problems are essentially economic.

From the beginning of his work Borsodi clearly considered the modern economy problematic. One of his last efforts was to clarify this with his unpublished book *Wealth*

[69] These books can be found at https:// https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/0B1wQ6T5I3eBVdUI3LTZyMEt5TEk and downloaded at no cost.

and Illth. There are a large number of folders of notes and typescript for that book, which I estimated to be on the order of a thousand pages, in the archives at the university of New Hampshire.

Borsodi's objective was clearly an alternative way of a life, an alternative economy. It was also about an alternative philosophy of life. He not only had the ideas; he had a program for achieving results in life. Mildred made her own practical contributions to this subject in her books, articles and editing the newsletters. I think it is a given that we need a more sustainable and humanitarian economy. The real question is how do we do that? It has been an elusive quest for several hundred years by a small army of thoughtful men and women. The 2020 crisis has, I believe, made the question of the type of economy we should have a high priority. Transition Centre has sought to address that need.

There are also two problems missing from the final list of seventeen, that were addressed in some detail in *Education and Living*, then numbers 4 and 5 of the first 13, Association and Gregational: How do I associate with groups and how do groups associate with each other? I personally believe these need another look. Part of my rationale is that social dynamics in the US have evolved considerably over the last half century at least. The new culture that has developed since at least the beginning of the Boomer generation, something I have studied, has some important qualities and consequences. In short, however, there are a number of social styles – ways people employ to achieve the way they live, the values they cherish – that I find have a dramatic and as yet unstated influence on the way modern society is actually working; or not. At this writing, that research is underway. Current political dynamics in the United States I believe mandate further and immediate work in this area.

Where do we go from here?

How do we go about updating Borsodi's system? I would point out that with some attention to presentation, it can be used as we find. But we could, should, and I propose to, create a new "version" if you will.; an upgrade. Saying that, what the universal problem structure itself addresses has not change. The very idea of universality tells us that they remain the same for all people in all times and places and will not change as we move into the future.

To start with, as noted, Borsodi's bibliography ended in the mid-sixties, just as a flood of new literature on the human potential begin to appear. An informative and highly relevant literature has continued to reach the bookshelves (and now online). There have also been dramatic advances in technology, in the way we access and present information and in the way we communicate. There is an awful lot of this, and it needs to be organized in some fashion – much of it as proposed by the Cove Institute project.

The global economy has also evolved, as has the impact of continued population growth and economic development on the environment. The mass of humanity, as Borsodi cautioned, is conditioned to progress. Their demand for resources steadily rises. One seventh of the world's population consumes nearly two-thirds of its resources. Several billion more (perhaps 10 billion total by 2050) are trying to catch up. There are economic and environmental issues today that Borsodi had not addressed at the time of the *Seventeen*

Problems book. He was beginning to look at them a few years later in his *Wealth and Illth* manuscript.

The 2020 COVID pandemic will likely produce a lot of changes in the way we organize our lives. For example, with social distancing, and the need we have for this may last a considerable time, we are seeing structural changes in society and the economy, in the way we associate, do business and provide educational services. Necessity, they say, is the mother of invention. In fact, there were already a number of trends that this crisis simply accelerated. We must adapt. The term getting wider use today is resiliency – not only adapting but increasing our capacity to do so and to guide the direction of inevitable change.

Borsodi was the pioneering in not only educational philosophy but particularly the concept of the integration of human knowledge. I believe it is clear that we need better knowledge management. We need new methodologies for resolving problems in an increasingly complex, nay chaotic, social environment. We need to not only clearly define our problems but have ready access to relevant information. And we need to break out of the specialist straight-jacket and develop a holistic, systems methodology. At base, as Borsodi so clearly saw, achieving the necessary cultural change for a post-industrial world requires education.

Borsodi made it very clear that his system was far from perfect and far from complete. He solicited those of what he hoped would be the humanistic educators to come, to further develop the system.

While we have some data that suggest the scale of the problems, we lack a systematic plan for achieving mandated transformation. We may have some idea what needs to be done but really don't know how to do it. This requires a new style of leadership with the requisite knowledge and skills.

At the grassroots level we need far more people seeking positive change. But it is leadership that shapes, change or thwarts it. Historian Arnold Toynbee called them the "creative minority" who guide the rise of new civilizations, new cultures. And when they are gone, civilizations soon follow. The Borsodi School of Living objective was to raise a determining minority of people who have the capacity to shape the dialog, teach and take leadership roles.

That has been my objective over much of my career. It is a stated objective of the Cove Institute model, of the School of Living, of Transition Centre and other related initiatives. Problems persist and become more challenging. Resolving them starts with individuals and it involves them forming communities where they can put the ideals of a post-industrial society into practice. And at the center of these communities are educational establishments; community universities Borsodi called them.

It is perhaps ironic that I began my own attempt to synthesize the field of knowledge associated with the Human Potential Movement the year Mildred Loomis died. From about that time I had the good fortune to begin to work with a series of mentors who were advocates of alternative living achieved through alternative education. Two of them were pioneers in digital education. One mentor was an expert in general systems theory. One was a leader in building alternative communities; through education and leadership. Yet

another was a founder of the Human Potential Movement. I had been a student of Korzybski's work and was familiar with his idea of integral learning. There were others. I knew nothing about Borsodi or the School of Living until 2010. When I got to Borsodi, and began a comprehensive study of his system, one which I frankly found astonishing in scope and depth, I was able to begin to bring several decades of work into a single, more coherent framework.

I set out to study and create a synthesis of the Human Potential Movement. Maslow's idea of self-actualization stood out as a good foundation for this development. In that model he proposed a short list of characteristics of the health person. It became clear that a lot of people had worked on that idea. Most had distinctive models in their own right. I begin to make notes on these various characteristics and, like Borsodi's card deck, mine begin to grow (albeit not as extensively as his was – only some 350). Eventually I reduced this list to 27 unique statements. I found that these seem to have an innate structure and I was able to develop a framework I named the Well-Formed Personality™.

The WFP model readily organized itself into a structure of three bands of three groups of three characteristics each. The first band is about individual development. The second is social. The third is about agency, or leadership. This is coincidentally very much the pattern of the seventeen-problem framework.

The product of my integral synthesis, incorporating Borsodi's system, is the first of a series of books, published in 2018: *Self-Reliance: Achieving Personal Resiliency and Independence* (link)[70].

As I compared Borsodi's system with mine, grouping the problems as I had done the characteristics of the WFP, I came up with a new list of 9 universal problems; a structure more aligned with my WFP model and covering everything Borsodi did. Here is a summary of my revised framework of Borsodi's system:

Transition Centre Revised Problem-Centered Framework

Foundation

Reason Why: A coherent statement of the philosophy behind this system, the **reason why** it should be studied at all.

Educational Model: How does it work? **Presentation**: Translating this system into something readily applicable today.

Problems of Knowledge

1. What is the nature of human nature? Who am I? What is my purpose in life?
2. What is the nature of the world? How am I a part of the natural order of things?
3. What is the meaning of history? The accumulated record of human experience. (Integral History).

Problems of Values

4. What is the nature of truth? How do I learn effectively?

[70] *Self-Reliance: Achieving Personal Resiliency and Independence*: https://www.amazon.com/dp/B07J1Q84RZ/ref=sr_1_6?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1538681689&sr=1-6&keywords=sharp+self-reliance.

5. What acts are right or wrong? What is goodness? Ethics and Morality.
6. What objects are beautiful or ugly?

Problems of Practice

7. Health: How to live a long life with maximum well-being?
8. Occupation: How do I spend my time? How should a human being work and play? How do I earn my living? How do I achieve self-reliance?
9. Organizational/Gregational: How do we organize enterprises, communities and collaborative effort?

All of Borsodi is included in this list of 9 problems. I have simply grouped some of them into more common categories.

In my *Self-Reliance: Achieving Personal Resiliency and Independence* I have touched on the first six of Borsodi's problems as listed here. In that book I provided an introduction to the Well-Formed Personality™. This is the model of the WFP:

SELF *(Band 1)*

1. Self-Awareness *(Group 1)*
    1. First Injunction: Know Thyself *(Characteristics 1)*
    2. Physical Awareness, The Traveler
    3. Mental Quietude, Emotions
2. Self-Identity *(Group 2)*
    4. Triple Nature: Self, Others and Nature
    5. Values, Beliefs, Philosophy
    6. Self-Remembering, Aim, Right Mindedness
3. Integrated Personality (*Group 3)*
    7. Non-duality
    8. Harmonious development of centers/intelligences
    9. Mobilization of Energy

SOCIETY *(Band 2)*

4. Awareness (Clarity of Mind, Philosophy) *(Group 4)*
    10. Openness to Experience
    11. Here and Now
    12. Objective observation
5. Reason *(Group 5)*
    13. Personal Level of Experience
    14. Realistic
    15. Frame of Reference (Values, Morals) Critical thinking
6. Relatedness, Non-duality, Integrated (Well-formed) *(Group 6)*
    16. Open and Accepting of others
    17. Relatedness/Belonging
    18. Love, Community, Compassion

AGENCY *(Band 3)*

7. Responsibility, Social awareness *(Group 7)*
    19. Responsibility
    20. Ethical

21. Commitment, Will

8. Agency/Will *(Group 8)*
    22. Freedom/Autonomy
    23. Courage
    24. Creativity
9. Quality of Life, Eudemonia *(Group 9)*
    25. Self-Realization
    26. Joy
    27. Transcendence

In my *Self-Reliance* I briefly addressed Band One, Group One of the WFP, The Self. That is highly congruent with Borsodi's first problem. I should note that my book is a workbook. It includes, in addition to key chapters, narrative and exercises related to working through the characteristics. Each person works through the list time and time again at their own pace. The process takes the form an expanding spiral. Each pass deepens knowledge, skill and psychological preparation. It is a lifetime program. It is fully integral. The foundation is the self; but healthy personality is the foundation for the well-formed community. Achieving this requires individuals capable of agency; of purposeful, transformational, change.

Borsodi proposed a Community University. The curriculum provides a general course of instruction covering the entire scope of the accumulated wisdom of the human race. Content, literature, is introduced with each characteristics of the WFP. Again, each pass deepens knowledge and understanding.

The program develops the capacity to learn, critical reasoning, a broad and general understanding of the human condition, a sense of the major trends of the modern world, an ability to express one's thought, to plan, organize and to lead, and the psychological preparation to achieve resiliency in all aspects of life.

I have to say that it is a bookish enterprise. Books have been and will remain a vital part of learning. I would point out that the best-read class of individuals are CEOs. They not uncommonly read a book a week; not a novel or travel guide but serious non-fiction. They read purposefully.

Appendix

Journal of Praxiology Notes

Borsodi launched the *Journal of Praxiology* (from the Greek word praxis which means practice; or the study of purposeful human behavior) in March 1955. The *Journal of Praxiology* was a professionally printed magazine format, printed by the Melbourne University Press, meaning by Borsodi, 6 x 9 inches with light green covers. The *Journal of Praxiology* was billed as "A Quarterly Journal Devoted to the Integration of Knowledge on the Basis of the Major Problems Involved in the Humanization of Human Action." Subscription was $3.00 per year. It ran for ten issues with the last dated March 1957. The Journal was discontinued when Borsodi resigned as Chancellor July 1957.

Of the ten issues, two were University of Melbourne Catalogs. The remaining eight can be divided into two categories.

Each of the issues was dedicated to one of the universal problems. The first issue was a symposium on Praxiology. Since that had direct bearing on the University of Melbourne curriculum, I reported briefly on the content in the Melbourne chapter. The remaining issues were standard professional journal collections of articles. The majority of these were reprints, not original contributions. While informative, the content of the reprints was only more or less directly related to the University of Melbourne program. Some were chosen for their opposing views. Many were about what would now be out of date content. As indicated, informative and thoughtful but no more than we might find today.

Those seven issues carried 83 articles. Borsodi contributed seven articles, one for each. Willis Nutting, who became the vice-chancellor of the University of Melbourne, submitted four, and School of Living Director of Education Mildred Loomis two. These three were the leaders of the School of Living and University of Melbourne. There were a few contributions by other University of Melbourne faculty.

Fall, September 1955, Vol 1, No. 3

This issue of the *Journal of Praxiology* was devoted to the problem of education.

The lead article of the September 1955 issues is by Albert Schweitzer, one of the great and leading humanitarians of his day, or any day. It was an extract, published by permission, from Schweitzer's *The Decay and Restoration of Civilization* (1923). The editorial introduction remarked that it was included "because of its approach to the crisis of our age in praxiological terms – in terms of the individual, in contrast to collective and state action. The whole book bears so directly on the ideas that have led to the founding of the University of Melbourne that we hope for the widest reading of it."

Schweitzer wrote:

"Again, the renewal of civilization is hindered by the fact that it is so exclusively the individual personality which must be looked to as the agent of the new movement."

"The renewal of civilization has nothing to do with movements which bear the character of experiences of the crowd; these are never anything but reactions to external happenings. But civilization can only revive when there shall come into being in a number of individuals a new tone of mind independent of the one prevalent among the crowd and in opposition to it, a tone of mind which will gradually win influence over the collective one, and in the end determine its characters. It is only an ethical movement which can rescue us from the slough of barbarism, and the ethical comes into existence only in individuals."

"Where the collective body works more strongly on the individual than the latter does upon it, the result is deterioration, because the noble element on which everything depends – the spiritual and moral worthiness of the individual – is thereby necessarily constricted and hampered. Decay of the spiritual and moral life then sets in…

"The past has, no doubt, seen the struggle of the free-thinking individual against the fettered spirit of a whole society, but the problem has never presented itself on the scale on which it does today…

"Will the man of today have the strength to carry out what the spirit demands from him, and what the age would like to make impossible?

"There is a tragic alliance between society as a whole and its economic conditions. With grim relentlessness those conditions tend to bring up the man of today as a being without freedom, without self-collectedness, without independence – in short as a human being so full of deficiencies that he lacks the qualities of humanity.

"And how heavy the tasks that the spirit has to take in hand! It has to create the power of understanding the truth that is really true, where at present nothing is current but propagandist truth.

Schweitzer made a list of the struggles that must be undertaken by a willing soul despite "the dull despair" that hangs over us.

And to the nature of the conviction needed, he wrote: "It must be optimistic and ethical." This ethical idea requires the perfection of the inner person. It requires "a purposive state of mind necessary to produce action on the world and society and to cause the cooperation of all our achievements in the final end of civilization – the spiritual and moral perfection of the individual."

I think this is one of the most insightful of the reprints and it speaks well to the moral imperative of the University of Melbourne program.

There are two articles in that issue that differentiate between the individual and the focus of the problem centered system of education, and society. This is a pivotable argument in Borsodi's system. Praxiology is about the individual. An important axiom of Borsodi's systems is that only individuals have the capacity to act. That capacity has to be developed through proper education.

Sociology is the study of human aggregations; about collective behavior including customs, traditions and culture. A society is viewed as an organic whole. But it requires an integrating force. Religion served that role but is a fading influence. Sociologists were seeing community dissolve. Sorokin is again noted as saying that sociology doesn't work. The implementation of social ideals often causes more harm than good.

Society is an abstraction. It has no objective existence. It's just an idea. Our understanding of "society" is more myth than reality. On the other hand, individuals do have objective existence, and existence that is verifiable. The relationship between individuals is also substantial.

Getting to the issue of what defines a proper education, speaks to the decline of the humanities, the liberal arts, in American schools and colleges. The loss of the humanities causes illiteracy. We find instead a system that educates a group mind in which the individual doesn't exist. Members of the group, according to progressive principles, work for each other, not themselves. School curriculums seek adjustment, consensus and conformity. Advertising also drives this herd mentality. The then new suburbs were also conformity generators – a cookie-cutter landscape. We no longer see creative writing but the techniques of mass communications. And this was before the digital era.

Corporations also thrive on conformity. And corporations were becoming the dominant institution of society. Corporations need equilibrium. They need smoothly working teams. Human relations became a major topic of human resource development. It produces "well-rounded" people." No brilliance, no genius, little imagination. Just do the job. That starts with getting along with each other. It is founded on an easy consensus. From a survey it was reported that about half of corporate leaders preferred their companies to run efficiently. The other half preferred leadership by strong personalities with convictions who made decisions. The overwhelming majority of their human resources managers, however, preferred the team approach. Thus, we find two-edges to groups relations: smoothly working and effective teams verses innovation, creativity and originality.

What is the nature of an education that develops individual potential? First, it is a general rather than specialized education. A general, or liberal, education prepares one for life in the broad sense. It gives people a common understanding of their culture. Most colleges then required a lot of general subjects – humanities, history, arts and literature, social sciences – many were electives – at least during the first two years. A number of colleges offered a year or two of general/liberal/honors studies – Great Books. But what is needed is more than a short course – it is a life-long undertaking. General studies should go hand in hand with vocational training in both undergraduate and graduate schools. And then become a life-long practice.

There are several approaches to general education. General, or liberal, education is primarily a study of literature. It is a survey of civilization – a mix of courses but taken as a unit, not as isolated topics. It should include the social sciences, philosophy, religion and the arts and architecture. It covers all times from classical antiquity through the Middle Ages and Renaissance, the Enlightenment and Romantic movements and down to modern times. Contrary to many general courses, in which much of the material is presented in cameo, maybe fifteen-minute blocks, liberal education is deep reading, discussion and oral examination. In summary, general education is required to train mature and responsible men and women in a democracy.

It is difficult to teach general studies with specialist teachers. These teachers should be generalist – a product of general education. Nonetheless, such courses are usually

taught by specialist, not generalist. There is considerable peer pressure in academia for each professor to stay within his/her subject.

There is an article on the integration of the social science. Again, the problem is over-specialization. It is also a problem of scientism – trying to apply the principles of science to the study of human behavior; that is, mechanistic, quantitative, reductionistic and teleological. The social sciences have tried to become hard sciences. Hard science is value free. Human behavior is value driven. Life is fluid and complex. Hard science requires measurement, numbers and calculation. It is descriptive. Much of human behavior defies exacting description and measurement. Science gives no insight into human reality. Indeed, it tends to deny it.

There was then a growing insistence that the social sciences break down their walls and cross fertilize. The new quantum science was giving a new perspective to the interrelationship of phenomena. General systems theory was just emerging, and ecosystems was on the way. Borsodi had been on the leading edge of integral education for some years[71]. He had been seeking an integral program for a number of years.

Willis Nutting, on leave of absence from Notre Dame at the time to work with Borsodi to launch the University of Melbourne, who taught the great books at Notre Dame, opened his response with the idea that the separation of the intelligentsia from their community has had disastrous consequences. The separation works both ways. The "eggheads" think the common man ignorant and contemptable. The common people find this attitude arrogant and impracticable. The real question is that of how to turn education, formal or informal, into practical wisdom.

He too cited specialization as the barrier. The fields are narrow, and the method of each field shapes its interpretation [and jargon]. We need an alternative approach that prepares men and women for leadership in the world as it is – not just fragments of it. Which leads us to Borsodi's problem-integrated education. Life, he reiterated, is about solving its problems. The problem centered system is an answer to the limitations of subject-centered methods.

The first step in solving any problem is to clearly define what the problem really is. The second is to explore the options and chose the best. This cannot be done through a subject-centered system. The method must be problem centered and the problem must be considered within the context of the whole and not as an isolated and abstract exercise.

How do you achieve integration? How do you organize a large body of specialized knowledge into a workable system? There are just too many specialties to even begin to organize them. This was illustrated with two list, one the topics of natural history (science), and the other of human history – more than a page, three columns, some 150 subjects. Borsodi was very good at creating syntheses. He had a rare capacity to find, sort, organize and describe thousands of subject topics. He knew how difficult it was to attempt synthesis. He worked diligently to develop a workable foundation for this approach.

How does problem-integration work? As has been said, the problem is the problem. As Einstein so clearly made the case, if given an hour to solve a vital problem, we would use

[71] We have, however, made little progress in this direction over the years.

59 minutes to define it. The implication is that once we see the problem, the pieces we need fall into place. This is called the 'A-ha" moment. It's something the human brain does if given a chance. Borsodi developed exhaustive lists of topics about each problem to help us focus and make choices consistent with the issue at hand. He used this system to organize a library to facilitate access to relevant knowledge. He would eventually produce an encyclopedic taxonomy towards the end of his life; his book *Seventeen Problems of Man and Society*.

At the end of this issue, the editors summarize that the greatest problem of education is produce a whole person.

This issue also announced that the opening of the University of Melbourne had been delayed due to ongoing work establishing the campus.

Winter Issue, December 1955, Vol. 1, No. 4

This issue is devoted to "Education and Ideology," and Borsodi provided a lead article about the subject.

That article is prefaced by a quote by Nicholas Berdyaev and a thought from poet Heinrich Heine. From Berdyaev:

> *"The present state of the world calls for a moral and spiritual revolution – revolution in the name of personality, of man, of every single person.*
>
> *"This revolution should restore the hierarchy of values, now quite shattered, and place the value of human personality above the idols of production, technics, the state, the race, the nationality, the collective.*

From Heine we get, expressed in rhythmic prose, that we are not the masters of our ideas but the servants of them and he ends with very strong words about what could be called the living dead – men and women who are not alive to ideas. Hard imagery but Heine was born into the age of revolution. He lived to see the rise of industrialism, of militant nationalism, and the sense that an order of things was coming to an end.

That Borsodi uses these two quotes to introduce his article and this issue, is suggestive. He opened with this line: "The sickness from which modern man is suffering, is neither economic nor political; it is philosophical." That is an oft-repeated statement in his work.

In short, we suffer from the ideas we adopt; the doctrines, the ideologies. They induce neurosis. Modern industrial society, the ideas we accept that underly it, has the potential of destroying itself.

Borsodi goes on to describe the manner in which we solve our problems. There are three elements required to solve them: our education, our ideologies and how we implement our ideas. False ideologies can be fatal to societies. Man, Borsodi wrote, can be taught to believe anything: "What he is, is what his education has made him."

The good news is that we have a choice. Our destiny is not determined. But the right choice is a matter of right education. In his *Education and Living*, Borsodi went to great lengths to describe what he considered optimal human living and how to achieve it.

Education is not the end of life. And it is not just technique. It is certainly not specialization. It is largely about understanding our values and beliefs. It is about access to the accumulate wisdom of humankind. But of greater importance, it is about how we implement our ideas. Do they solve our problems or not? Does this give us a more optimal life or not? Do we learn to live like genuinely human beings? Or not?

The following article is by Anatol Rapoport. Rapoport was a student of Alfred Korzybski's general semantics and indeed the article was originally published in the Institute of General Semantics journal *ETC*,. Rapoport was one of the founders of general systems theory and just at this time engaged in establishing an organization to promote it.

Rapoport wrote that Korzybski defined mankind by our capacity to preserve past experience. While he didn't name it, that came from Korzybski's 1921 *Manhood of Humanity*. Korzybski called this accumulation of experience "time-binding" and it was a key to his system throughout his life. Borsodi had read that book.

"Accumulated wisdom" is not a new idea. The idea goes back to at least Edmund Burke (1729 – 1797). Time-binding is, of course, made possible by our capacity for language. Language allows the record of human experience to survive the death of individual members. No other species has this capacity.

Rapoport went on to explain how language works. He wrote about Korzybski's ideas such as abstraction (generalization of experiences), logic and grammar. Korzybski went into language behavior in detail in his book *Science and Sanity*. I personally consider a thorough knowledge of Korzybski's general semantics an indispensable compliment to Borsodi's system. You can find chapters related to Korzybski's system on my Korzybski Institute for the Study of General Semantics blog site[72].

Most of the other articles in this issue are scholarly but not directly connected to the University of Melbourne program.

A brochure inserted into a previous issue of the *Journal of Praxiology* had invited participation in the "Man is the Problem? conference. The seminar was scheduled December 27, 1955 to January 1, 1956 at Melbourne, Florida. There were four distinguished panelist, Joseph Wood Krutch, Willis D. Nutting, Paul J. Tillich and Philip G. Wylie. Ralph Borsodi was listed as Lector.

The brochure announced that "This program of the University is based upon the conviction that there is a serious – almost fatal – defect in the manner in which we of the free world are dealing with the crisis created by the Marxist World Revolution, the rise of the great new nations of Asia, and the renaissance of the Islamic World," and "that this defect cannot be remedied by mere public and political action but must begin with such searching re-examination of our basic beliefs and values as is the purpose of the Seminar."

There were ten session listed for the Seminar and a Convocation:

- Tuesday, December 27 starting at 8:45 am: The purpose of the seminar, the nature of human action – the subject matter of Praxiological study, the concept of

[72] Korzybski Institute for the Study of General Semantics: https://korzybskiinstitute.blogspot.com/?view=magazine.

basic problems of living and "Ideas, Ideals, and ideologies." That evening the topic was "The Nature of Man Considered as a Psychic Being."

- December 28th, morning: "The Nature of Man Considered as a Physical Being." Evening: "The Nature of Man Considered as a Psychological Being."
- December 29th, morning: "The problem of Equality and of Inequality. Are all Men Equal as Christianity, Socialism and Democracy maintains, or are they Unequal as Republicanism, Aristocracy, Feudalism, hierarchy, and Fascism maintains?
- Evening: "The Problem of Man's Moral Nature. Is Man inherently Selfish or Unselfish – inherently Good as Locke and Rousseau maintained; inherently Evil as Hobbes and Calvin maintained; or inherently neither Good nor Evil – in effect, morally born a tabula rasa or clean slate?
- December 31st, morning: "The Problem of Man's Educability. Is man Capable of Behaving Rationally, or of Learning to do so, or is he in fact an Inescapably Impulsive, Instinctual and Irrational Animal Suffering from the Illusion that his Actions are and can be Guided by Reasoning?
- Evening: "The Problem of Man's Responsibility. Is he by Nature a Conditioned Biological Machine whose Activities are Determined by Heredity and Environment or is he Endowed with Free-will and the Capacity for Free Self-direction?
- December 31st, morning: "Alternative Solutions of the Problem of the Nature of Human Nature – Psychic, Somatic and Organic Ideas, Ideals and ideologies.
- Evening: "Integration and Praxiology: Higher Education's Response to the Challenge of this 'time of Troubles.'"
- Sunday, 3 p.m., "Convocation: Man is the Problem? A Summary and Prognosis by the Leaders of the Seminar.
- Sunday Evening: "The Chancellor and Mrs. Borsodi invite all the members of the Seminar to a buffet supper …

Attendance was limited to 76 persons with preference given to the Friends of the University. The seminar fee was $35.

There was a reading list: Each member was requested to read *the Journal of Praxiology*, and one or more of the following books: *The Measure of Man* by Joseph Wood Krutch; *The Courage to Be*, by Paul J. Tillich; *The Disappearance*, by Philip G. Wylie; *Man the Unknown*, by Alexis Carrel; *Individualism*, by Horace M. Kallen; *The Conduct of Life*, by Lewis Mumford; *The Sane Society* by Erich Fromm; *Man and Technics* by Oswald Spengler; *The Reach of the Mind*, by J. B. Rhine; *Male and Female*, by Margaret Mead; *Twilight of Man*, by Ernest A. Hooton; *Modern Man and the Liberal Arts*, by Francis Neilsen.

The afternoons were free and recreational programs were provided by a Reception Committee; members listed.

Mildred Loomis contributed a short article about the seminar in this issue. She noted that 60 people had attended. She wrote that "I came away with the feeling that every cell of my brain and body had been turned over." She quoted panelist Philip Wylie who said at the Convocation: "We have discussed more ideas this week than most people ever heard of. We not only examined them exhaustively, but in my case exhaustingly."

Mildred wrote that Borsodi presented at each session "some phase of the anthropic problem: i.e., What is the specific essence of human nature?" The panel members then responded.

She described the panelist: "Dr. Joseph Woods Krutch, sandy-haired, witty, slouch-hatted, scientist and naturalist; Dr. Willis Nutting, quiet, friendly, Catholic educator from Notre Dame; Dr. Paul Tillich, sturdy, seventyish, warm, profound theologian from Harvard; Philip Wylie, wiry, tonsorial, correct, skeptical, bantering novelist-psychologist." She offered the opinion that the panelists were compartmentalized in their thinking as opposed to Borsodi's integral approach to life: "Each looked at life from their own point of view, and in a sense is a specialist, but each at base is a philosophy." Mildred added that there did appear to be some friction on this point between them and Borsodi; between Borsodi's practicality and their academic style.

Coming out of the seminar, Mildred wrote, there was a common understanding in terms of: "They agreed that man does not always think; nor even usually think; but that he can and does sometimes think. They agreed that man is full of prejudices, and much of what he believes is prejudice, but also that much of it is real value judgement. They admitted that we are conditioned by external influence, but that in essence man is not merely a machine reacting to stimulus; that we can and do make choices. They agreed, therefore, that if a better society results, it will be because men create it; they are not satisfied that we must wait for better institutions to create better. Borsodi made it clear that the future depends upon right education."

Spring Issue, March 1956, Vol II, No. 1

This issue was devoted to the concept of human action.

Is this an age of reason or rationalization? The modern age of Europe dawned with an appeal to reason; to the intellect, to learning and thinking. Freud perhaps brought that ideology into doubt – we have the capacity for self-deception.

There are a variety of reasons for considering our age one of rationalization rather than reason. "Rationality" is "the human tendency to falsify motives and explain what we do or want to do in terms that will win social approval as well as personal self-esteem." Reason is impartial. Rationality justifies self-interest and partisanship. There is a modernistic assumption that there is nothing "real" but only what we want.

The idea of "reason" took shape in ancient times. The ancient Greeks considered reason as a middle ground between opinion and enlightenment. For them, human life had to make sense. With the modern era came a mechanistic conception of the universe which deprived the human condition of meaning. It proposed a science of man. However, as Freud made clear, behind the wall of consciousness, of our capacity to reason, lie "fears, anxiety's and insecurities." When these things dominate, reason fails, and we turn to superstition.

Modern society has become a battleground between reason and unreason. We don't need to think. Experts now run our lives. Elaborate bureaucratic organizations seek to "guide" all aspects of our daily lives. We are bombarded with advertising and other propaganda. Our individuality, our humanity, is at stake. To overcome this requires a

fundamental, and personal, examination of both self and society. It takes "know thyself" to a new level.

University of Melbourne faculty member Lillian McDonald framed the context of this issue. Actions, she began, can be voluntary or involuntary. We can be more or less conscious of our sensory perceptions. Our minds are constantly mulling our experience: agreeing, disagreeing, making judgements. Our awareness of these things is a choice, an action. A real question is can we really choose our behavior or is it defined by nature? We must choose between being an individual or submitting to a group. Which is most conducive to our wellbeing? What forms of behavior have pathological consequences?

What is implied, of course, is that we need to have a deeper understanding of what it means to be a human being. We need to understand how our choices, our actions, are shaped by the social and natural world of which we are a part. We need to know what is "normal," that is optimal. Borsodi, as we saw, went to great lengths of define the "normal" human being.

What makes an individual? We are individual to the extent that we act purposively to achieve our full potential as a human being. Groups and governments may support that objective but in fact only each of us has the power of choice in the matter. We can strive to develop our potential or not; to accept what is given or test its validity, etc. Personal autonomy, however, is demanding, challenging, and scary. Most people naturally avoid it; or rationalize it; make a pretense of individuality.

At another level we must ask about the effect of our choices, lack of choice or bad choices, have on our mental and physical health. The sources of anxiety include survival, mating, thinking and expression. We carry a lot of quilt about things. There are conflicts. There are trials and tribulations. Do we address these by turning outward or inward? Many people turn to overindulgence in food, alcohol, sex, drugs, tobacco, to escapist entertainment, and even suicide. Do we take responsibility for our lives and for the lives of those we love, community or larger aggregate, or do we expect them to take care of us?

The purpose of reason is to allow us to distinguish truth from falsehood. It requires us to go beyond reaction to feeling – to go beyond our unquestioned instinct.

Freud explored what he defined as the id and superego, Jung the architypes and the shadow. These represent inner drives. These are things reason deals with.

McDonald proposed four basic principles drawn from Borsodi's work:

1. No human being has the right to prevent any other human being from living. That means we must each have the opportunity to secure, food, shelter and to protect ourselves.
2. No human being has the right to prevent another human being from selecting his [her] desired mate, or to force them to remain together if they chose to separate.
3. No human being has the right to prevent another human being from thinking and communicating his [her] individual thoughts.
4. No human being has the right to prevent another human being from expressing him[her]self in his chosen fashion.

A following article, an abstract from a meeting of the University of Melbourne rectors, is about the balance between specialization and general culture. At issue was the "increasing concern at the narrowing of the average student's outlook response caused by excessive emphasis on specialization." Who, and at what level, has the responsibility for maintaining a balance? What is the role of education?

A number of universities, as noted in the previous issue, had adopted programs of general or liberal education. With few exceptions, it was said, the approaches are more policy than practice, and token. There was some discussion of topics that included: who would take the lead in developing more general studies, would special training be needed for teachers, and what is the role of the student's peers?

'The obvious answer to these concerns is the University of Melbourne program.

Oliver Reiser, a University of Pittsburgh professor, further addresses the issues of the chaos of specialization. Reiser, I should point out, was another close student of Korzybski's general semantics. He published a seminal book entitled *The Integration of Human Knowledge* in 1958 which is a topic in the last chapters in my *Alfred Korzybski: Time Binder*, which is available in pdf format[73].

General education, noted Reiser, seeks "understanding of principles, patterns, methods, meanings and implications of acts." It encourages exploration of values. It teaches critical thinking. Reiser wanted to go beyond general education to integral education and to create departments of integral education in universities (the subject of his upcoming book). Students so trained would-be candidates for leadership.

The integration of knowledge requires an understanding of the interrelationship of ideas and social institutions. Ideas are embedded in the background of human experience. You don't get this from a university education. Reiser noted that university education is over-intellectualized and lacks opportunity for creative expression. He also pointed out that some of our assumptions, including scientific assumptions, are misleading, if not false. He gave as an example Newton's mechanistic view of the physical universe – an unwarranted fabrication which nonetheless shaped western perception of reality for centuries [and still does]. The new sciences, relativity and quantum physics, give us insights into the underlaying interdependence and harmony of the natural universe. This has reshaped our understanding of the universe and of life.

False assumptions can of course be even more egregious in non-objective fields. We have a lot of ideologies, perhaps good ideas, that just don't work and often cause great harm. The point is that by reviewing these assumptions in context, and in comparison, we achieve a better evaluation of what is actually going on.

We find the staff of the University of Melbourne engaged in a project to develop a "standard vocabulary of basic ideas, ideals, and ideologies with which philosophy, the humanities, and the social sciences deal." The objective was a single meaning for each word. Many scientific subjects have clearly defined terms but not so the "Tower of Babel" of the softer, social sciences. The vocabulary was not produced, however, in 1967 Borsodi published a small book *The Definition of Definition*, about this issue.

[73] Korzybski Time-Binder: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1PMUKyIwOobunqaTBMOgkODXZm7kec6_8z13Ea72fbX4/edit

Borsodi's reflection on the content of this issue included several points. He commented on the progress of definition in the sciences and particularly biology. He contributed a short essay on "Lao-Tze on Action." Lao Tze was an ancient Chinese philosopher credited with the idea of the Tao. Borsodi explained the Tao in terms of "Nature never makes any ado, and yet Nature does everything." He then made a curious connection to one of the fundamental principles of western economics, laissez faire. It is generally taken to means "hands off" the economy. Borsodi made the point that the term, expressed in French, means "the world goes of itself." He went on further to note that Taoism expressed life in in terms of a culture that is "Familial and villagistic, agrarian and handicraft" as opposed to "Industrialism, Urbanism, and Communism. "

There is an excerpt from Lewis Mumford's *The Conduct of Life* about a type of social event called a "singularity." These events Mumford defined as points of dramatic social change, moments of crisis and disintegration, often associated with "a single decisive personality, or a small group of informed and purposeful men." They are typically associated with names like "Confucian, Buddhist, Christian, Mohammedian, Marxian," etc. (I take it this is a common theme with Margaret Mead's small groups that change the world.). Mumford wrote: "Only within the compass of the person can a total change be effected within the span of a single generation, sufficient to produce the necessary effect on civilization at large: like the seed-crystal, he passes on to the whole the new order of the part." William James (*The Will to Believe*) echoed this idea: ideas come from individuals.

Mumford goes on to describe the "historic person", with his "values, purposes, ideals and ends." This is true in the progress of many fields and is particularly clear in the progress of modern science and technology. Leaders have names. In any generation there are never more than a few of historic stature and we know history by their names and the effects they produced.

Is a singularity moment at hand today? Is there a new personality who can "embrace life in its unity and wholeness?" Or do we simply have an unresolved crisis, condemned to be "bound in shallows and in miseries?"

Summer Issue, June 1956, Vol. II, No. 2

The focus of this issue is "Implementation." It is about "action, rather than the mere thinking out of an idea, … the most profound necessity for true progress in government, education and the growth of the individual." It is natural to come up with high ideals, "but principles alone have never advanced civilization."

Borsodi opened this issue with an article on "Implementing a New Education." He wrote that he considered all life is education, every person is an educator and every relationship and event in life educational. It starts in the home.

Every generation stands midway between the past and the future. From the past we receive the accumulated knowledge and wisdom and to the future we transmit it. In the present we apply it to our needs; and perhaps add to it. The role of the teacher is in the present as a conduit of knowledge. The goal of the teacher is not only to provide knowledge but to ensure ideas are implemented to solve the problems of living. Each of us must learn and apply it.

It is a question of how we apply this knowledge. Does the school furnish right education or mis-education? Does it help the individual live normally: "imbue him with some devotion to what is good, true and beautiful." Will it "help him in seeking to improve, from the standpoint of normal living, not only his physical and material world but also the cultural institutions by which he is environed. In sum, every good school will help the individual live more like a human being."

Education is not restricted to the cultivation of the intellect. "Education is a process of cultivation which develops, either rightly or wrongly, the perceptions, the emotions, the intelligence, and finally, the actions of human beings." Right education is organized. It is lifelong: "If he ceases to learn he is intellectually and spiritual dead even though his body continues to function."

Borsodi stressed the difference between good and bad education. Mis-education addresses only the intellect. It is using the school to indoctrinate. Such mis-education is a form of intellectual and spiritual suicide.

The quality, or lack thereof, of our educational system can be found in society's leadership: "In failing to make adult education our primary concern, if no provision is made community by community, *and in every community*, for the education of adults by the wisest and most disinterested individuals society can produce, the gap in social organization is certain to be filled by a leadership composed of the most aggressive, the most selfish, and the most short-sighted individuals which society has produced." And, Borsodi concluded, the leadership of America demonstrated this truth.

"How," asked Borsodi, "are we to deal with adult problems educationally? … My answer," wrote, "is: Furnish people in every community with a new kind of leadership through the agency of a new kind of educational institution. Establish schools of living or community universities, and through them provide such leadership in every community that every individual and group therein will think it natural to turn to the accumulated knowledge and wisdom of mankind for light upon the problems which they have failed to solve or which they have not been able to solve properly."

Borsodi continued along this line: "If people are not rightly educated, no amount of constitutional fiat or sumptuary legislation will solve our present problems. All that legislation and coercion will do is to serve to create new social problems without having disposed of the old. The true solution of all political, economic and social questions must begin, as Confucius sublimely expressed in *The Great Learning*, with the 'cultivation of the personal life.' Good habits, good institution and all other good things begin and end as the by-products of the right education of the individual."

Borsodi believed many Americans, in religion, politics, commerce and industry, were dissatisfied with how education works. He cited a number of adult educational reforms such as those lead by Grundtvig and Kold in Denmark; Oberlin in Alsatia, Tomkins in Nova Scotia, James Yen in China, Coates in North Carolina and the School of Living founded in Suffern, New York and then at Brookville, Ohio.

Borsodi asserted that schools of living and community universities "would complete the circuit of systematic education from birth to death. It would organically relate the professional, university-trained minority to the community on an educational, not a

commercial, basis. The more highly educated of the community would thus become the resident extension staff of the university and-or the school of living. As a result, both the social and the cultural life of the community would eventually be transformed."

Could existing universities fill this role? Borsodi thought they could but "it would be necessary to:

1. Call them to leadership of society thus transforming them into a fellowship of leaders of the people. They would be entrusted the task of communicating the accumulated wisdom and knowledge of mankind to not only their students but the community at large.
2. Make them completely independent of every interest which may introduce biases into their studies, their teachings and their function of leadership.
3. Regionalize them to a particular locale.
4. Eliminate the emphasis on research.
5. Distinguish more clearly between the functions of the university itself and the professional and technical schools attached to it.
6. Organize them so that the integrating center of all the special fields of art and science is a combined school of education and philosophy.

These principles are not inconsistent with the underlying mission of higher education. Quoting William G. Sumner, the objective is: "… to form character, make good citizens, keep family more pure, elevate morals, establish individual character, …." But the direction of education has shifted away from the community, away from development of moral character, to something more on the order of vocational training.

In short, "Right education is fundamental to the inculcation of the knowledge which will develop this ability to reason and decide on behalf of one's own liberty and wellbeing, as well as that of others."

There are eight additional articles in this issue to support Borsodi's thesis. I will briefly describe some of the points they covered.

Hanford Henderson was an American educator with ideas very much like Borsodi's. He developed a system of "organic education." He was an advocate of the Arts and Crafts Movement. He was an opponent of the progressive school of education. He supported Borsodi's premise that we must address life not by mass action but by "wholesome individual action, necessarily directed from within,' informed not by the chronic issues of the day but by eternal verities." Our problems are the same as those of others across the globe and through time. He wrote that he was " … surrounded by a multitude of men and women pathetically eager to save the world, but strangely unwilling to submit to the austere self-discipline of saving themselves.. They forget that the foundation cannot rise above its source." He added, following Emerson, that what troubles the world today is that "It has fastened its attention upon the machinery of life, has ignored the one supreme human purpose for which all machinery exists, and now, in the resulting chaos, is amazed to find that the machinery fails to function."

The supreme purpose of life, Henderson asserted, "is the unfolding and perfecting of the human spirit." This quality cannot be manifest by a group; it is the fruit of individual effort.

The problems of the world are due to mass action. A paternalistic state is worst of all for it "robs the individual of that character and self-development which would have been his as the result of sturdy, manly self-activity. It is a great moral disservice to do for either children or adults the things that they ought self-reliantly to do for themselves." The more we depend on the state, the weaker the individual, the family and our core institutions.

In closing, Henderson distinguishes between mass action and cooperation: the two have nothing in common. Cooperation is "confederated individual action in which the impulse is voluntary, and the direction is from within." For society to work, it is not the institutions but rather about individual men and women. When they are sound and forceful and enlightened, the society which they collectively form will inevitably be the right sort."

Willis Nutting contributed "How to Start a Revolution." The article, first published in 1947, predated his involvement with Melbourne University but clearly demonstrates a commitment to Borsodi's work. He opened with "The Green Revolution can be carried on without fanfare and without official support, without the bludgeoning power of organized pressure groups and without a direct attack on the present order. … What it needs is simply people, people who believe in it and are willing to work to the utmost to carry it out, people who really want to be free. For the fundamental means of bringing on the revolution is for each person to make himself free."

This "revolution" requires each to take appropriate action. It requires individual initiative. It requires courage. It involves reducing one's dependencies. It requires commitment: "If for freedom's sake, he is not willing to sacrifice comfort, fashion and keeping up with the Joneses, then he had better stop talking about freedom. He does not deserve it. He has no part or lot in the American heritage."

Each must work out their own program of action. They must learn to be self-reliant, rather than turning to experts and authorities.

Nutting offered three principles for those wishing to join the Green Revolution:

1. "Let every such person make a determined effort in the situation in which he finds himself, to produce for himself and his family as much as possible of what is needed, to do for himself and them as much as he can of those things that have to be done, and, as far as is possible, to do without those things and services which cannot be provided by the activity of the family.
2. Let him set for himself as a goal the possession of a home on the land equipped for a great amount of self-sufficiency.
3. Let him combine with like-minded friends and neighbors in cooperative effort to do those necessary thins which cannot be well done within the family.

Breaking old habits is hard work. Our society has had (1947) a century of conditioning. The economy and government had both become highly centralized.

There are a number of values we must adopt to win independence and we must adopt them wholeheartedly. The first is self-discipline. Freedom comes only at a price. It requires self-denial – breaking the chains of illusion foisted on us by the media – the gratification of our wants and desires. "The person, therefore, who is seriously trying to set himself free will begin at once to examine those things which he thinks he needs, in order to

find out which of them he really does need." Self-denial is not merely an unpleasant practice but a matter of choice. Self-conquest is an adventure and a source of happiness which former ages knew well.

Nutting continued: "Another comparatively unfamiliar value which must be appreciated if one is to win independence is *work* – hard, hot, sweaty, dirty physical work." We are conditioned to consider work disagreeable. We consider toil and affliction as things to be avoided. True work, however, is noble. "True work is the employment of mind and hand on some material with a view of producing something of value. It is the carrying out, by means of physical skill and material instruments, of a plan conceived by the mind." There is an idea and a plan, tools and skills, and raw materials are transformed into something of worth. And that includes moral worth, pride and dignity.

Before we can begin to reclaim our independence, we must come into possession of a very different mental outlook. We must learn about the things that make freedom possible. And here we find the role of the teacher and a school for living. This teaching is not about dogma. It is not about ideology. "There need be no hatred, no coercion, no worship of power, wealth or comfort, no defrauding of our neighbor." It is about withdrawing from dependencies and gradually building a new order of life, a new culture. This new order will take place "so silently, so naturally, that the attention of the public will have to be called to it." As it progresses, the power-holding institutions will lose their capacity to control lives and society. The machinery necessitated by the current industrial economy will become increasingly unnecessary.

Sir Winston Churchill was cited at the end of the article: "A university education ought to be a guide to the reading of a lifetime …. One who has profited from university education has a wide choice. He need never be idle or bored. He is free from the vice of the modern age which requires something new not only every day but every two or three hours of each day…. The first duty of a university is to teach wisdom, not a trade; character, not technicalities."

The next article is an excerpt from the work of American psychologist and philosopher William James, "The Dignity of Man." James asked: 'What is an ideal?" It is an idea that "must carry with it that sort of outlook, uplift, and brightness that go with all intellectual facts." It stirs the emotions. It must have novelty – but novelty alone does not make and ideal. Most ideals are in fact fads. For James it must be more than a whim or sentiment, as most ideals are. It must be consciously perceived.

There are a lot of ideals around about all sorts of issues: the way things should be, could be, ought to be. But do they make any real and vital difference? Do they miss the important things? James wrote: "The solid meaning of life is always the same eternal thing -- the marriage, namely, of some unhabitual ideal, however special, with some fidelity, courage and endurance; with some man's or woman's pains."

And closing this article the editors quoted from Plato: "A sound nurture and education creates good natures in the state; sound natures in the state, receiving a good education, develop into better men than their predecessors."

The article "Why Implementation?" was drawn from a variety of writers. The first cited was from G. K. Chesterton's *What's Wrong with the World?* Chesterton was a prolific

British writer. He wrote the Father Brown stories. He was also influential in distributism, aka decentralism. In short, he conveyed that our ideals, poorly thought out, can be our worst enemies.

The second selection is from I. I. Rabi, a Columbia professor of physics and Nobel laurate and critic of American education. In short, displaced by utopian ideals, science and mathematics were being pushed out of the curriculum and preplaced by scientific popularization. Rabi believed that professors of physics should take courses in the arts humanities, and literature. We need both hard science and humanities for a sound culture and there is no reason they should be mutually exclusive.

The third item was on "The Efficient and Final Cause" from an address by the Duke of Edinburgh (Prince Phillip) who was also a Chancellor for two universities. He spoke of the common problem of education in all countries. He spoke to the importance of Church and universities in forming the culture of Europe. Professors once drew on the same literature, traveled, formed a common continental culture. Now they are cloistered and specialized.

Nonetheless, he said, their responsibility is even great in the modern world (c. 1955). The responsibilities of universities and their professors were clear: While students may specialize, they must also

> *"emerge as complete human beings capable of taking their proper place in society as a credit to their Universities both for their professional knowledge and as men. There is no conflict between the disciplines here. Nobody can be termed a complete man who has no knowledge of what science has to teach, and equally, human obligations cannot be escaped on the grounds of being a specialized scientist or technologist."*
>
> *"By human obligations I mean the ability to behave in a reasonable way, to observe restraint so that restraints do not have to be imposed, to be able to think clearly and objectively so that false doctrines cannot gain ground. I believe that it also means the ability to see through nonsense, political, economic, scientific and so on, and the feeling that it is a duty to resist it.*

And concludes:

> *"I would like to repeat that the conflict is not between disciplines, between humanism and science. The conflict lies between man and the world he has made for himself. Man has succeeded in changing many things, but he has not changed much himself.*
>
> *"… we must remember the central character, man and his possibilities, limitations, and the depths he can sink to if he relaxes his self-control.*

The implication is clear. In order for higher education to live up to its mission, education must be holistic, draw on the accumulated wisdom of humankind and serve the evolution of a just society.

Lillian McDonald gave the readers a new vision of the "University of Melbourne." One building had been completed and it served a triple function as library, instruction hall and administrative office. A photo of that building is in the Melbourne chapter.

Proposed structures, in this air view, included a combined auditorium and cafeteria (3), a new press building (2), four dormitories (4) and an open-air chapel (5). The original university building is (1).

McDonald wrote of the series of public seminars that had been held in the new University of Melbourne building. The first was "Man Is The Problem?" This program has been described elsewhere. Over the following three months several other seminars were held: "The Challenge of Islam," "The Challenge of New Asia,' and "The Challenge of Socialism, Communism and World Revolution." Each seminar had a theme. First, theocratic states are always in danger of fanaticism and holy war. Second, western influence has inhibited Asia from fulfilling its potentialities. And third, the world is threatened by ideologies that are detrimental to the freedom and prosperity of the individual.

There are values embedded in each of these issues and in order to have a proper understanding they must be thoughtfully evaluated. The objective of the University of Melbourne mission is to: "to furnish individual men and women with the educational tools which will make freedom possible in their own lives and the lives of those with whom they come in contact." She reminded the readers that the type of study pursed at the University of Melbourne is Praxiology, defined as "the study of individual human action."

From Stuart Chase, "Goals for America." Like Borsodi, Chase was a radical economist and, as described in chapter three, both were pioneering consumer advocates in the 1920s. Unlike Borsodi, Chase was also a committed socialist. I have contributed a chapter, "Korzybski and Stuart Chase" in *Korzybski And …* edited by Corey Anton and Lance Strate, that outlines Chase's life and work.

The merit of this article by Chase is that it supports Borsodi's homesteader's view of the pioneering productive family that lives by its own wits. Today, wrote Chase, we have an "American national family." That family had been forged in the crucible of World War II. It is shaped by emerging technology. It's just one big economy that has shifted from production to consumption. Yes, there is inequality but full production after the war can fix that, he wrote.

We have to give it to the Journal editors that they are being impartial. This article, and Chase's philosophy in general, fly in the face of Borsodi's system. But in their final comments, the Journal editors make it clear that Chases' views give us pause to consider what we really want for the individual and the family: consumers or free and independent producers.

The last two articles of this issue, Irwin Edman's "Art and philosophy," and Winfred Rhoades' "The Fact of Responsibility," I would consider literary contributions. Irwin was a Columbia University professor of philosophy. Of Rhoades I find little other than that she was a popular writer about life and religion.

In a final comment by the editors, and again regarding Chase, yes, the Journal will publish opposing views to its core philosophy. They welcome original material including "poetry, essay, article or allegory. They noted that the Borsodi's were visiting their son William, a member of the diplomatic corps, in Vigo, Spain. Willis Nutting was acting as Chancellor, taking a leave from Notre Dame University.

The editors also suggested "some pretty powerful and serious reading" including C. Wright Mills' *The Power Elite*, S. I. Hayakawa's *The Fully Functional Personality*, Norman Cousins' *Think of a Man*, and Simone Weil's *The Need for Roots*. They conclude: "Each of these may suggest something that you, as an individual, can do to bring issues of the day to human resolution."

Fall Issue, September 1956, Vol. II, No. 3

The focus of this issue was "Functional Organization." It is again a "literary" work with all but two articles reprints. The exceptions being contributions by Willis Nutting and Ralph Borsodi. Let's start with these for context.

Nutting's article is "The American School: Is Its Organization Adapted to Its Function?" Nutting started by observing that change is often impeded by existing practices of organization. In short, doing the same thing and expecting different results. He noted that the Medieval University was established in the then prevailing fashion as a guild. The student became an apprentice to the master as in carpentry.

In modern America, the prevailing practice of organizing things to get them done became business and industry. Education was fitted to this form of organization. Schools came to look like factories, run by managers, teachers became employees on a production line and students the product to be "turned out" – a block of resistant material to be shaped and formed in time defined increments. Education became a mechanical process.

If we want to change education, he suggested, we must change the functional form. To start with, the relationship between teachers and students. That relationship must become personal again. We all have had teachers who were special, who became our mentors – a role not found in the teachers' job description.

Nutting wrote:

> *"The best site for education is a community of learning, where several teachers and students together, encouraging, criticizing each other, strike sparks off each other, lead a common life of dealing with their problems. Here there can be an atmosphere of challenge that leads everyone to do his best, and keeps everyone on his toes. In this atmosphere everyone is a teacher and everyone a learner. This is what every school, and especially a college ought to be."*

Nutting had already developed such a practice at Notre Dame before going to Melbourne. He was walking his talk.

Borsodi contributed "Wanted: A New Economics Text." He opened with a quote from Harvard sociologist Pitirim Sorokin about economists, political analysts, sociologists and others "tampering" with society. It causes more harm than good. The social sciences need to be reconstructed from the top down and freed of "other values" before they can become a true science.

Borsodi focused on economists whose theories, since Adam Smith, have steadily eroded personal freedom by placing us into increasing dependence upon the state. The error was that economic problems came to be treated politically rather than educationally. It is about treating problems as social issues rather than as individual problems to be solved in the course of daily life.

A new economic textbook would be to current economics as chemistry is to alchemy. There are centuries of mistaken thinking to be corrected. Political economics is a "bastard science;" not economics at all, said Borsodi.

For Borsodi, economics is a moral issue. It was about how two or more people interact. Their transactions could be free, constrained or compulsory. Politics is about rules, regulations, in short compulsion. Modern economic theory is not, he said, about individual choice but increasingly about how the standard of living could be raised. In short, it's about a growth economy. For Borsodi it is not simply a problem of production and distribution but rather a whole complex of problems that must include the occupational problem, the possessional problem and the organizational problem.

Curiously, Borsodi made no mention of his own economics text, *Prosperity and Security,* published in 1938.

The remaining eight articles, while supportive of the main theme expressed by Nutting and Borsodi, do not appear to be products of Borsodi's core philosophy. They are readable and thoughtful, but I consider them tangential.

The Journal editors had their own rather lengthy comment about the selected articles. They were said to each represent some organizational framework. The question must then be, how does the reader, the student of the University of Melbourne respond to this problem.

From a personal perspective, I found these articles suggest two things. First, they represent a public dialog that could be found in books and popular media through much of the twentieth century. We seem to have less of that type of literature today – in part due to media but also in part due to a shift in what people prefer to read. The second is that they address conditions of the mid-twentieth century. From a historical perspective this can be instructive: What progress have we made? Or not.

This issue announced the formal opening ceremony of the University of Melbourne.

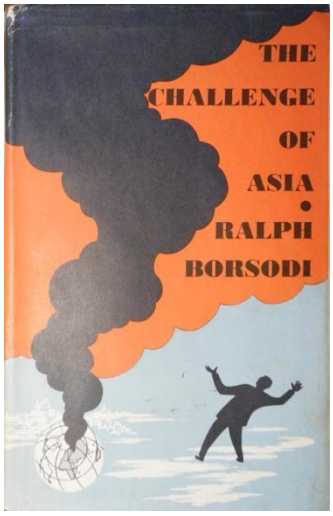
Winter Issue, December 1956, Vol. II, No. 4.

The editors' comment:

"This issue of Journal of Praxiology begins a series of contributions on the implications of the praxiological method for various academic disciplines. Dr. Nutting begins the series with a study of the implications for history, and Miss McDonald follows with its implications for philosophy. Others are in preparation by various friends of the university. We believe we are initiating a series which will provide major contributions both to the illumination and the justification of the concept.

"In a sense, Mr. Borsodi's discussion of economics in this issue and his contribution on the same topic in the September 1956 issue may be considered a part of the series.

"We are pleased with the fact that Mr. Morgan Harris was challenged to respond with his paper to Mr. Borsodi's provocative call for a new economics text in the September 1956 issue.



Mildred Loomis contributed "New University.

The editors reported the publication of Melbourne University Press' first book, Borsodi's *The Challenge of Asia*. The description and outline of the curriculum of the University of Melbourne was carried in that book and summarized in the Melbourne chapter.

Willis Nutting, in "History as a Praxiological Discipline," wrote that history falls short as a science for lack of method. It has little if any power to predict the future. Since its founding there is little agreement about the purpose of history, other than a record of things past. Meticulous academic history collects and organizes the facts of history. Many historians, from ancient times, had something they wanted to prove or "an axe to grind." On the left, for example, history, and the social sciences in general, were strongly biased towards a Marxist point of view.

There is little in the exhaustive lists of names and dates we see in textbooks to inspire the study of history. The history we want to read must tell a story, said Nutting. That requires interpretation, searching for cause and effect and perhaps a presumption of moral judgement. Marx, Gibbon, Spengler, Toynbee and Sorokin had a story to tell. Winston Churchill, a British stateman, wrote his definitive *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples* as a compelling and very readable, story. Churchill wrote his six volume *The Second World War* from fact and from personal experiencing as a commanding figure in that war. For these writers there is a point to history. There is a story to be told and there is something to be learned about human destiny.

From a praxiological perspective, it is not as much a matter of predicting the future from past events as it is shaping an alternative future. It is about a Green Revolution. It is about learning about human nature. Above all, it is about learning from those who shaped society – not merely the great names but the men and women who built and lead communities, wrote and made fine art and architecture.

Lillian McDonald contributed "Responsible Philosophy." Philosophy attempts to define who and what we are as human beings. There are a lot of philosophies and they have a lot of different views of the essence of human nature. Praxiology ask philosophy "what it has to offer by way of instruction as to how to achieve the sane mind and the sound body, and it offers to philosophy a method of advancing its own welfare." The first two groups of the problems of living are concerned with questions of how we can come to understand our lives in this world and examine what we believe in terms of finding solutions to the third group, the practical problems of living. That is a workable philosophy.

The problems of living are about the brute facts of existence, not some ideal or ideology. Each person must work through the realities of his or her own life. We must make choices about the options available to us. Much of Borsodi's work was to make exhaustive lists of those option. The problem outline in *The Challenge of Asia* points in that direction. We need to make clear and accurate observations about what is actually going on around us. What is the problem we wish to solve? And what do we need to accomplish that?

Morgan Harris contributed "The Place of Government in Economic Life." Harris had been working with Borsodi since at least the founding of the School of Living at Suffern. He was an old hand, so to speak. He was a staunch supporter of Mildred Loomis over the years.

In 1956 he was founder and president of Brentwood College in Los Angeles. Harris and Borsodi, it appears, had an ongoing economic dialog.

Harris responded to Borsodi's article in the previous issue about a new economic text. In short, he wrote, government plays the role of leveling the field, but it exerts its authority through coercion. At best, it protects people from exploitation. Or it may completely dominate a planned economy. Harris said he was in basic agreement with Borsodi but is not clear about the rules of the game Borsodi might propose. Harris listed a number of his own.

Borsodi's "Politics and Economics," is a response to Morgan Harris' article. Here we find more of his method.

Borsodi agreed that there is no sharp disagreement between himself and Harris. He is firm that economics is in his opinion a pseudo-science. At issue is that Borsodi considered economics and politics as two distinct things. When government controls commerce, it is not economics but rather politics. "Political economics," he insisted, is the bastard product of the marriage between politics and economics.

In his classification system, Borsodi defined economics science as four categories: Monetary undertakings, non-monetary undertakings, illicit undertakings and parasitic undertakings. While he did not cite his book, those categories are fully discussed in his *Prosperity and Security*[74]. Borsodi emphasized the fact that economics is free but political science is about controls, about coercive undertakings, be they legitimate or usurpatory.

Borsodi further clarified that "economics" deals only with monetary issues which is at best but half of the production of goods and services. And it clearly ignores the criminal and parasitic aspects of the economy.

Borsodi proposes three mandates for economics to become a genuine science.

1. It must cease being "national."
2. It must devote itself to developing natural laws which have perpetual validity, and
3. It must cease postulating itself on the idea of an abstract and mythical "homo economicus." It should rather focus on what human beings actually do.

Some years later Borsodi did write an expanded book on economics, *Wealth and Illth*. The manuscript was lost but voluminous notes and the early typescript are in the University of New Hampshire archives.

Mildred Loomis' "A New University" is a reprint from an article published by her in the Ohio State University *Journal of Higher Education* also in December 1956. The subtitle of the article was "The Problem-Integrated Education of Melbourne University." I provided an outline of that article in the Melbourne chapter but will briefly cover it as a part of the Journal dialog. In short, she highlighted the advantages of University of Melbourne over traditional higher education.

This article is particularly insightful about Mildred. Mildred had devoted her early life to education – both as a student and as a teacher. Mildred had excelled as a student in

[74] I have described *Prosperity and Security* in Chapter 9.

school and university. She was an A student, a class leader. She was a graduate student at Columbia when she met Borsodi in 1932. That encounter began to change her outlook on education.

Mildred opened her article with this line: "Two very different university catalogues lie on my desk: A 1,000 page volume from Columbia University and the small booklet from the University of Melbourne." Since Columbia, she wrote, she had become disillusioned with modern higher education. The reason for that, she offered, was the important contrast she found between those two catalogues.

To begin with, she called Columbia "a kind of intellectual department store," with thousands of intellectually customers choosing from 10,000 courses. Knowledge is departmentalized, occupational programs specialized and thinking fragmented. The emphasis is on the material. Students have no clear goal for their education. She wrote: "our vision of a 'new culture' is vague, or frankly limited to Western Man." There is little of genuine wisdom. Those like herself, two decades earlier, inspired by a world-wide revolution, came away disillusioned.

Mildred then summarized the very different offering of the University of Melbourne. It offers courses that "go to the root of everything." Students do not study subjects. They study sixteen universal and perpetual problems of living. "The real problems of man," she wrote, "never change – from place to place, or time to time. Their forms change, but their essences do not." Rather than pedagogy, the University of Melbourne uses the seminar method. They draw on a library organized by the sixteen-problem framework. From this study, she wrote, she was able to personally "substitute much clarity for confusion, integration for fragmentation, satisfaction for frustration."

Mildred raised the question: "How to produce whole men instead of mere specialists? The University of Melbourne method is integrative. It is organic. It is committed to no religious denomination, but an interfaith chapel is planned where people can seek common ties across the races and cultures. It embraces the emotional as well as intellectual. It is practical – it is about solving the problems of life. It is praxiological, directed toward individuals and not towards groups or masses. It recognizes that ultimately all problems – even those which call for some collective action – are dealt with individual by individual." What society needs is not corporations and governments and institutions but rather a determining majority educated and equipped with "effective means and measures" without whom civilizations disintegrate into barbarism.

She added: "It equips individuals for rational, human, and effective personal conduct and individual behavior. It makes ethical and aesthetic considerations a part of all individual action. It replaces modern man's preoccupation with wealth and power; it assists each person to form his philosophy of the Good Life based on the good, the true and the beautiful."

The remaining four articles are, again, literary. One has to do with class difference and the welfare state. Another is an imaginary dialog between Socrates and Sir Francis Bacon about the progress of scientific knowledge. That one addressed the nature of truth. Socrates was not impressed by Bacon. One is an essay on the differences between the approach to science and the arts. There is an article with a Chinese perspective on home,

family, garden and nature with quotes from Chinese classical literature. Again, these selections are readable, thought provoking, but tangential.

Spring Issue, March 1957, Vol. III, No. 1

The focus of this issue is the gregational problem. The editors comment that *Education and Living* was reissues in green boards (and boxed) and that the University planned to publish *The Crisis in Politics, A Critique of Modern Political Science*. That book was not published, and this issue was the last of the *Journal of Praxiology*.

The opening article was: "Race, Class, Religious, National and Ideological Conflict: The Educational Versus the Political Approach." The timing of this issue was important. In January of 1957 Martin Luther King, Jr. and other black pastors had met in Georgia to coordinate civil rights protest. A few months later, in September, President Eisenhower sent federal troops to support integration of Central High School in Arkansas and a few days later signed the Civil Rights Act.

In February, Borsodi had led a seminar on "The Challenge of Asia." Fifteen participants drafted a manifesto regarding education in Asia – for universities to take the lead in promoting "inter-cultural, inter-racial, inter-ideological, and inter-religious relations." It was described as "a declaration of allegiance to that moral and human wisdom which transcends the fear-wrought barriers of nation, race and creed." There were fourteen responses from Asian educational leaders.

The University of Melbourne proposed a conference in Asia regarding this topic. This issue was devoted to the objectives of the proposed conference.

Borsodi's contribution was "The Problem of Gregational Ethics." The gregational problem is how groups treat each other. He provided a chart that listed gregational forms. Borsodi observed that the problem was one of parochial values. As a result, we are in a period of ideological conflict that "makes this an age of moral confusion," or perhaps worse, "Moral Relativism." This persistent situation suggests something absent. We need not only moral values but "individuals with a passionate determination to act in accordance with them." We devote vast sums to science and technology but not to the solution of ethical problems.

Borsodi listed five distinctive kinds of ethical problems (which are discussed in *The Challenge of Asia*):

1. "The need of putting substance into the definition of good and evil, and defining both in terms which are universal and perpetual and not merely those of different cultures and different ideological groups. Moral Relativism impedes this effort.
2. "The need of defining conscience; of defining what Kant called the moral law within.' Borsodi thought that the cultivation of conscience is as important as the cultivation of intelligence.
3. "The need to distinguish between motive and action; between the motives which inspire individual actions and the consequences of the actions performed by human beings."

4. "The need of recognizing the quadruplicate nature of the factors involved in making rational and adequate ethical judgement. No ethical commandant, law or rule is adequality expressed unless it recognizes that there are always two parties involves, and unless it formulates the respective rights and obligations of each of them.
5. "Finally, the need of recognizing that what is learned from the study of ethics must produce a body of universal and perpetual principles – a body of natural laws, or laws which are sanctioned by their morality rather than by the mere power of the state.

Borsodi continued with four "crucial" problems of how groups should treat each other. He offered this perspective:

1. "How should individuals, acting as members, leaders, or representatives of a group, when engaged in doing or refusing to do, anything for, to or with another group and the individuals who belong to it (a) strive to have their own group and their own members treat other groups and those who belong to them; (b) actually treat other groups and those who belong to them, and how should (c) any other group and its members reciprocally strive to have its own group and its members act; and (d) actually treat the other group and its members.

"To deal with this problem intelligently, rigorous definition and classification of at least three great classes of groups is essential:

2. Organized gregations such as empires, nations down to families.
3. Unorganized gregations such as caste and classes, audiences, crowds and members of movement.
4. Pseudo-gregations "such as races and nationalities, occupations, income and wealth classes; sexual, martial, and age 'groups.'"

How these groups are organized he presented in an accompanying chart.

The problem, Borsodi concluded, is that leaders "haven't the remotest notion that there may be a body of natural moral law which is capable of resolving … group conflicts." The solution: "The first step toward equipping intelligent and concerned men and women with means for dealing with this problem is obviously clear formulation of the real nature of the gregational problem."

Willis Nutting contributed "The Gregational Problem in History." Group relations throughout history, Nutting wrote, is typically about how groups maintain their advantage with regard to their groups. The exceptions are there but too rare. History is also replete with stories of minority groups asserting their rights. Revolutions all too frequent; Gandhi's too rare.

I would note that much of the best of us, as well as the worst, has come out of times of turmoil and conflict. I see Borsodi and friends seeking such a moment in history; perhaps a turning point for the best. Or not.

There is another article about "The Revolt of Asia" from the works of Josef Washington Hall, nicknamed Upton Close. It was originally dated 1927 – at which time Gandhi had been working for Indian independence for over ten years. It is about white

dominance of Asia. Hall traced some of the history and outlined issues related to colonization.

The majority of this issue is a series of articles about gregational relationships. They include:

White □□ Negroes

White Race □□Colored Race

Race □□ Race

Capitalist Class □□ Working Class

Caste □□ Caste

Untouchables □□ Hindus (By Gandhi)

Capitalist □□ Laborer's

Master □□ Slaves, Aristotle

Master □□ Slaves, Plato

Conquering State □□ Conquered State

Higher Civilization □□ Lower Civilization

Religion □□ Religion

There was finally a short glossary of terms. One of the main objectives of the University of Melbourne, the editor's noted, is the formulation of a standard vocabulary.

Conclusion

A few months after this last issue of the *Journal of Praxiology* Borsodi resigned as Chancellor of the University of Melbourne and his departure was noted as "sudden." He sold his printing equipment. He and Clare apparently moved out of Melbourne Village.

But he wasn't done. He fulfilled his promise to support education in India. At the time of his departure from the University of Melbourne, Borsodi was in fact in correspondence with leaders in India. He was invited to India in 1958 and that visit turned into an extended stay.

About the Author

Bill Sharp has a life-long interest in learning – action. This study of the life and work of Ralph Borsodi is another chapter in a long series of projects focuses on the development of individual resiliency and community leadership.

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